



Story and Art by Yumi Tamura

Vol.6



shôjo

BASARA™

Vol. 6

Story and Art by
Yumi Tamura

Basara

Vol. #6

Shôjo Edition

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STORY THUS FAR

In the early 21st century, an apocalypse turned fertile lands into deserts and brought human civilization to its knees. Control of Japan passed into the hands of tyrannical kings. 300 years later, a new hope was born.

At the birth of a rebel chieftain's twins, the blind prophet Nagi predicted, "This is a child of destiny, one who will grow to lead the people and be the light in the sky of our nation's future." The people of Byakko Village placed their hopes in their Chieftain's son Tatara and raised him as the "Boy of Destiny."

With the tyrannical Ukon XV ruling Japan through his ruthless sons, a better tomorrow can only be achieved by means of strife and bloodshed. When the "Boy of Destiny" is killed by the Red King's forces, it is up to his twin sister to secretly take up his sword and fulfill the prophecy of their birth. Sarasa must lead her people in her brother's name or all will be lost.

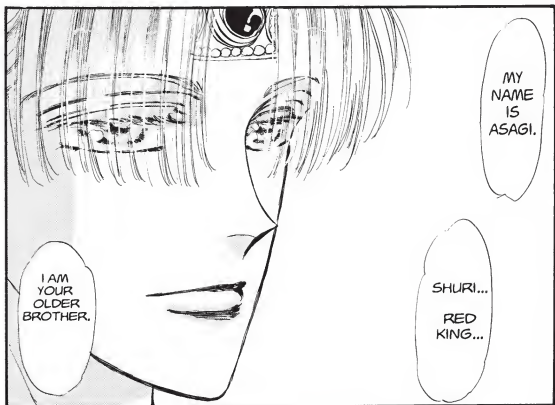
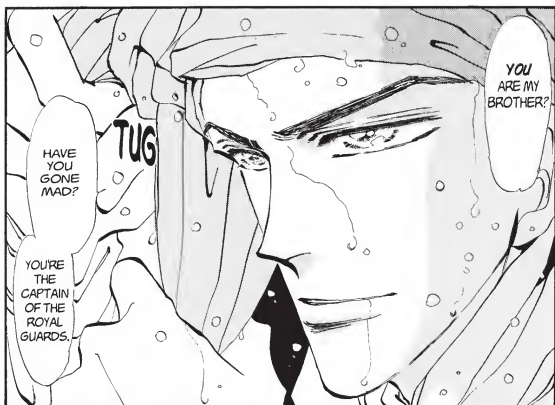
In Kyushu, Sarasa has gained allies and an impossible victory over the Red King—crippling his Navy and chariot corps. But in doing so, she has lost the Byakko sword. Then Tatara is invited to meet the Blue King, who has somehow gained possession of her village's sacred blade.

Traveling with Shuri --who's in the guise of a monk!-- Sarasa's plan to journey to Seiran and secretly check things out was foiled when they were captured and forced to participate in a horrible, deadly race for the Blue King's entertainment. Then the Blue King wanted to sacrifice her to a fake dragon! Through strength and will, Sarasa fought the drug that would have caused her to sleep through the ritual, instead revealing to all the trickery of the Blue King.

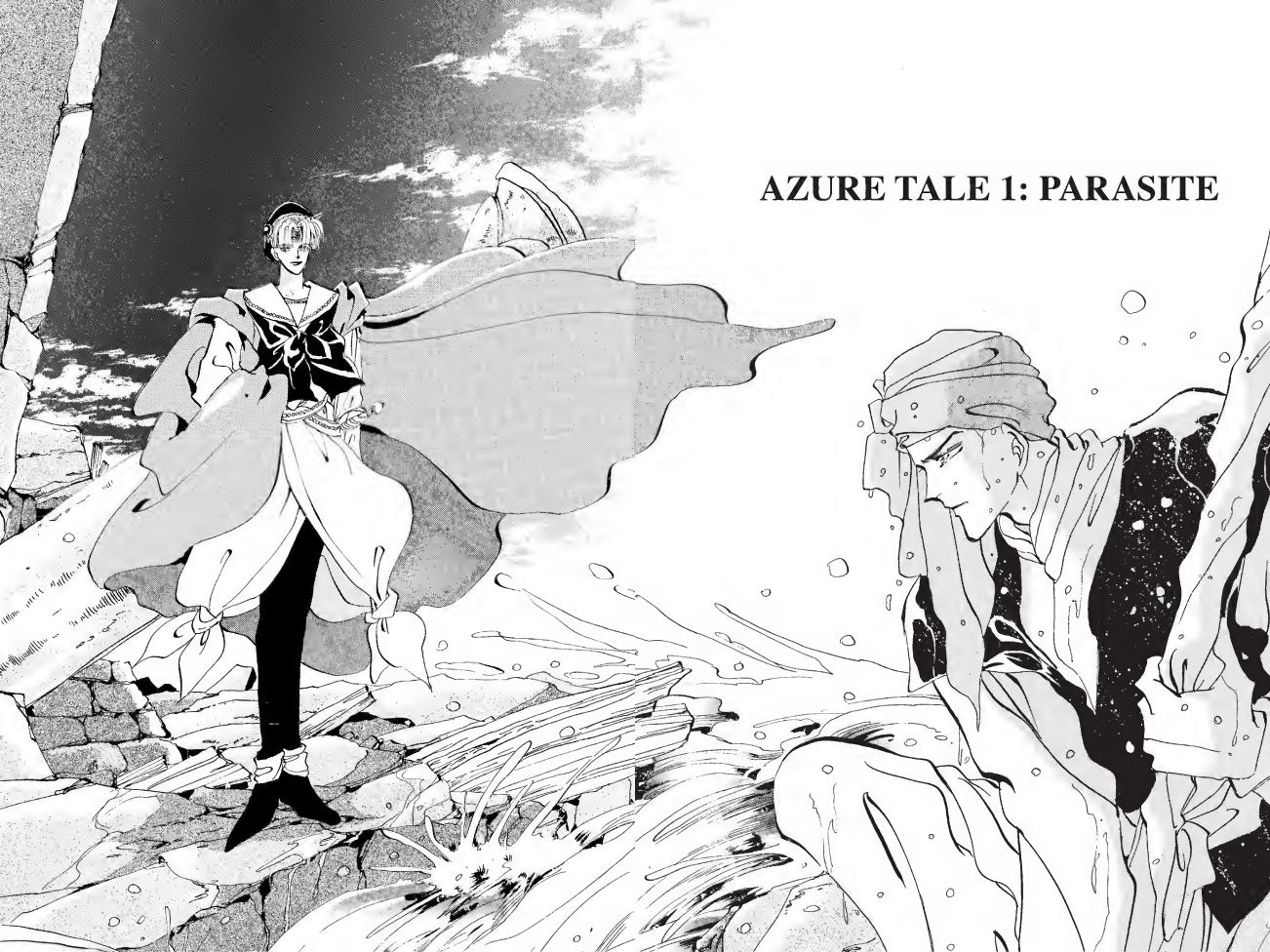
With the help of the Count, the people rise up to defeat the cruel Blue King, and Tatara gains more allies. Just as Sarasa and Shuri are reunited, the Blue King's secret floodgates are opened, destroying the palace and separating Sarasa from Shuri, who soon learns Captain Asagi is the true Blue King.

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AZURE TALE 1: PARASITE





TINY TAM-TAM TIME ①

Hello! How are you?

I've been watching the Olympics every day and every night. (And falling behind on my work!) ☹

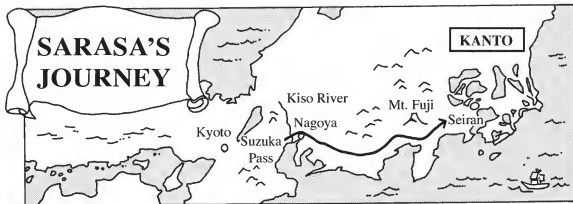
There sure were a lot of upsets. (Not so fun for the participants, I'll bet.) Especially Ryoko "Yawara" Tamura! Before this, I'd only seen her all smiley, but her intensity and concentration during the matches were incredible. I was moved seeing her cry over winning silver instead of gold.



THIS IS THE ONLY TIME I GET PATRIOTIC.

I felt so sorry for Bubka. ↗ Biondi and Krabbe couldn't compete, either. I'm happy for Lewis, though.

GOOD LUCK NEXT TIME!
TAMU.









OF HIS
OWN
SONS.



HE'S
AFRAID--



I'M
TIRED
OF
THIS.



DID YOU
KNOW...

TO THE
POINT!

GET--

WE HAD
ANOTHER
BROTHER,
RIGHT
BEFORE
ME?

NO, I
DIDN'T!



OUR
FATHER
KNEW HE
HAD
NOTHING
TO FEAR
FROM HIM.

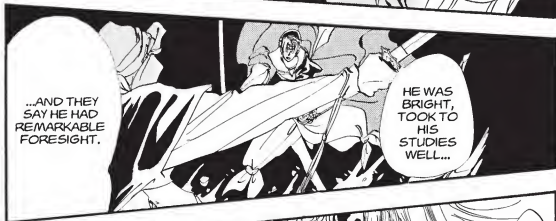
THE ELDEST,
THE BLACK
KING, WAS A
GIANT BODY
WITH A MIDGET
BRAIN.



THEN MY
MOTHER, THE
HIGH QUEEN,
BORE A SON.

AFTER
HIM...

THE
QUEENS ALL
BORE GIRLS
FOR A TIME.



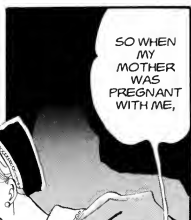
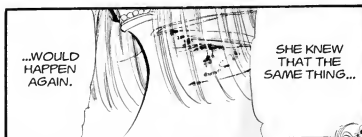
...AND THEY
SAY HE HAD
REMARKABLE
FORESIGHT.

HE WAS
BRIGHT,
TOOK TO
HIS
STUDIES
WELL...



HE KNEW OUR
BROTHER
WOULD BE A
THREAT IN THE
FUTURE.

FATHER
FEARED
HIM.









WHY--

WHY DO
YOU THINK
HE LET
YOU
LIVE?

WHEN YOU
WERE BORN
UNDER SUCH
A
PROPHECY!?



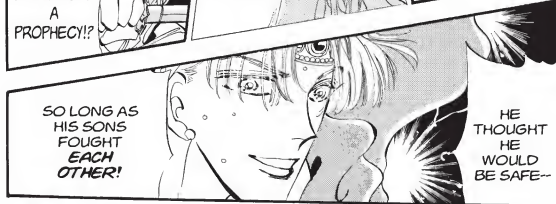
IF THE
BABY IS A
BOY...

...HE WILL
BRING MIS-
FORTUNE
TO YOU.



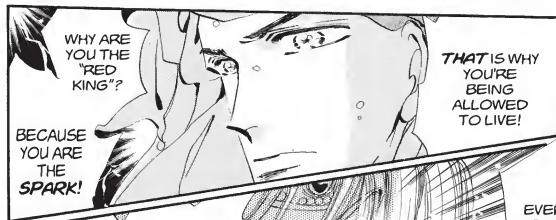
WHY?

WHY DO
YOU THINK
HE DIDN'T
KILL YOU?



SO LONG AS
HIS SONS
FOUGHT
**EACH
OTHER!**

HE
THOUGHT
HE
WOULD
BE SAFE--



WHY ARE
YOU THE
"RED
KING"?

BECAUSE
YOU ARE
THE
SPARK!

**THAT IS WHY
YOU'RE
BEING
ALLOWED
TO LIVE!**



BUT YOU'RE
JUST
ANOTHER
ONE OF HIS
PAWNS!

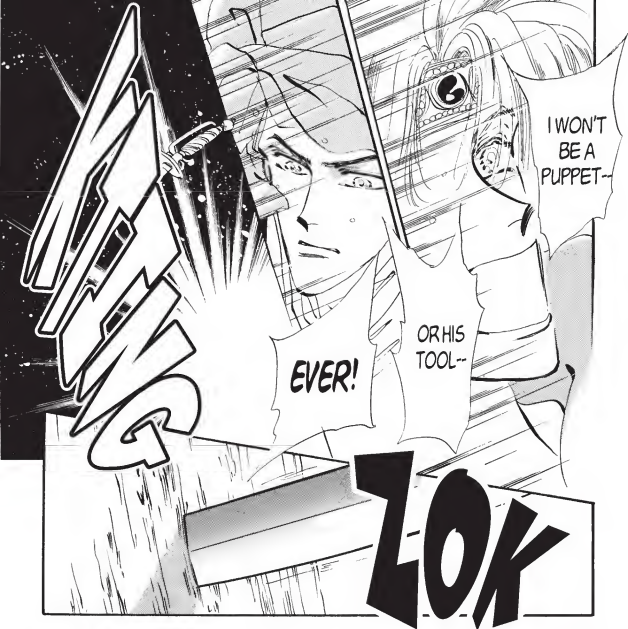
YOU MAY
THINK YOU
ACT ONLY
FOR
YOURSELF--

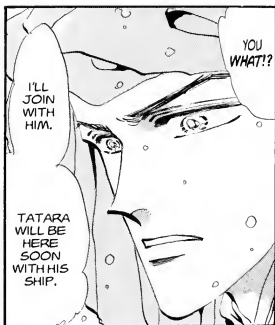
OUR
FATHER IS
HAPPY!

EVERY
TIME
YOU
REBEL--

EVERY
TIME YOU
START A
BATTLE--















THE ONLY
WAY TO
SURVIVE IS
TO LIVE
OFF
SOMEONE
ELSE.

YES.



YOU MADE
HIM INTO A
SACRIFICE.

I THINK
HE'S HERE
ALREADY.

THOUGH I
COULDN'T
SEE WELL.

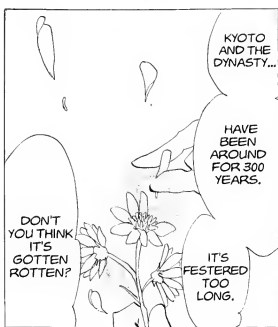
...IN-
STEAD
OF
THE
SERPENT
KING?

SO YOU'RE
GOING TO
USE
TATARA
NOW...



I'LL
MAKE
HIM
TRUST
ME.

AND YOU
THINK
TATARA'S
GOING TO
TRUST YOU!?



KYOTO
AND THE
DYNASTY...

HAVE
BEEN
AROUND
FOR 300
YEARS.

DON'T
YOU THINK
IT'S
GOTTEN
ROTTEN?

IT'S
FESTERED
TOO
LONG.

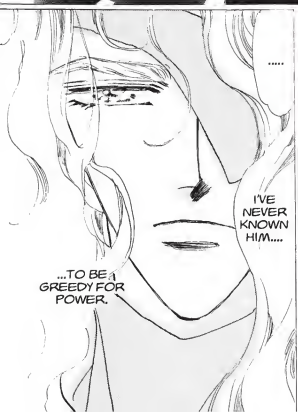


A COUPLE
OF TIMES,
WITH THE
TROUPE.



SAY,
AGEHA.

HAVE YOU
EVER BEEN
TO KYOTO?



THERE
WILL
ALWAYS
BE A
DESTROY-
ER...

...AT THE
BOUNDARY
OF A NEW
AGE.

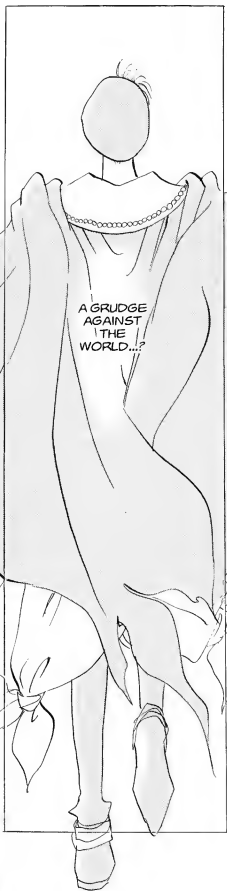
A GRUDGE
AGAINST
THE
WORLD...?

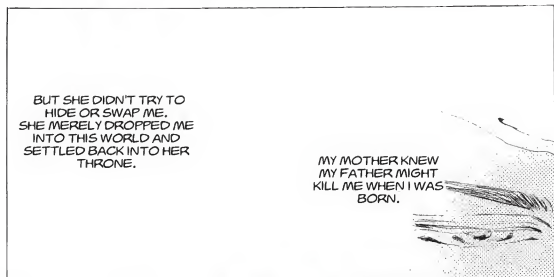
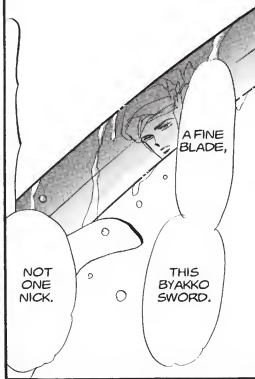
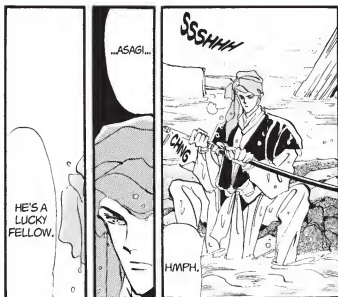
WHAT IS
IT THAT
SPURS
HIM,
THEN?

HMM.

NOW IT'S
GETTING
INTERESTING...

ONLY
HATE...?







BACK TO
THE FIRST
STEP!

NOW...



HA,
HA,
HA!
YOU'RE
THE
BEST!

YOU
FOL-
LOWED
ME
HERE?



HA...



TO
SUO!

TIME
TO
RETURN--



SOMEBODY'S
PINNED
UNDER THE
WRECKAGE!
WE NEED
HELP!

HEY!

GET THE
FOOD
TO DRY
GROUND!

HEY!

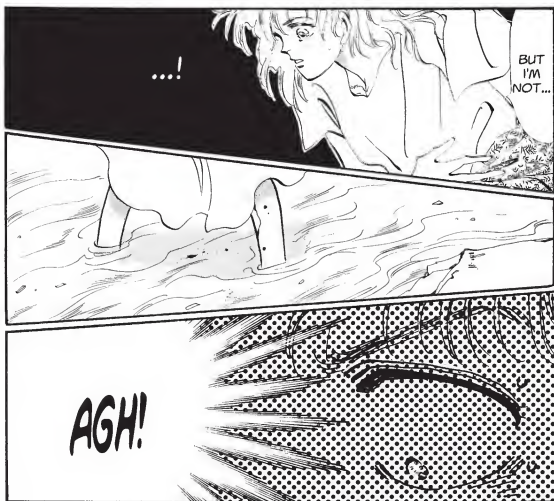
OVER
HERE!

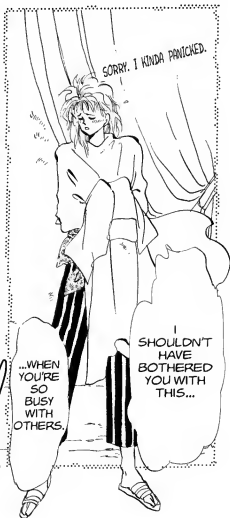
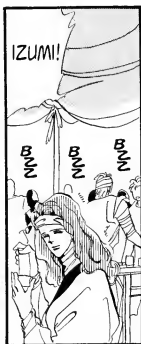
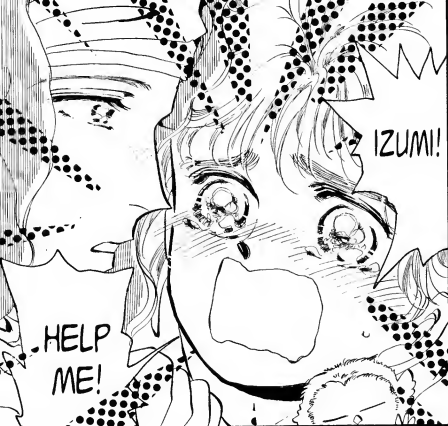
IS THERE
MEDICINE!?

HEY!

HEY!

BRING THE
INJURED
OVER
HERE!







IT WANTS
TO GO
BACK TO
BEING A
GIRL.

IT'S
TELLING
ME...



...MY
BODY
HASN'T
ACTED...

SINCE
THAT
DAY...

...LIKE
A
GIRL'S.

SINCE I
SWORE TO
LIVE AS MY
BROTHER...



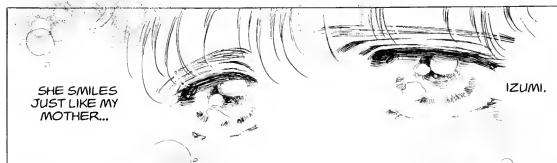
I WANTED
TO BE A
GIRL
AGAIN!

I
WANTED
TO GO
BACK.

BUT
SOME-
WHERE
IN MY
HEART...



SARASA...



MAYBE SHE'S
STILL ALIVE OUT
THERE...

SOMEWHERE...

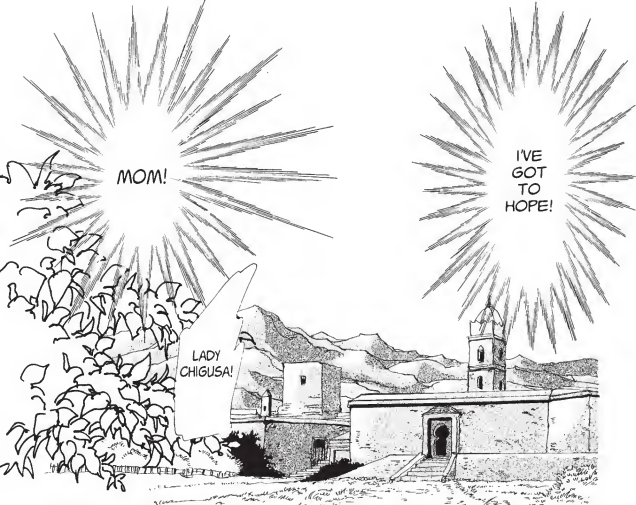
MAYBE
THEY
TOOK
HER
AWAY.

I DIDN'T
SEE HER
GET
KILLED.

WHENEVER
I THINK OF
HER...

MY MIND
GOES
BLANK.

MOM...







GENERA
KAZAN!

LORD
ASHO!

SUO CITY - THE RED PALACE



THEY SEEM
TO HAVE
WITHDRAWN
COMPLETELY.

THE LAST OF
THE BLUE ARMY
TROOPS ARE
GONE.



THE RED KING
MUST HAVE
SUCCEEDED!

SOME-
THING
MUST'VE
HAPPENED
IN THE
EAST.



IS THIS
TREASON!?

I HAVEN'T
TOLD THE
RED KING...



I
SUPPOSE
I SHALL
STAY...

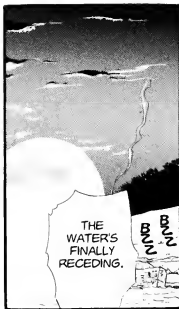
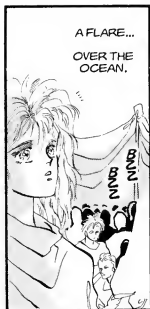
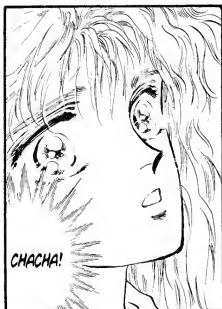
...JUST A
WHILE
LONGER...

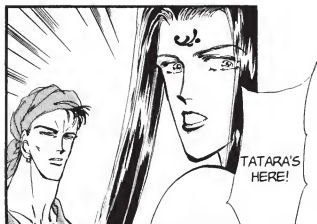


HMM.

BUT IT SEEMS
THAT HEAVEN IS
STILL ON THE RED
KING'S SIDE.

FOR A WHILE,
I WOULD HAVE
BETRAYED HIM
TO THE BLUE
KING.



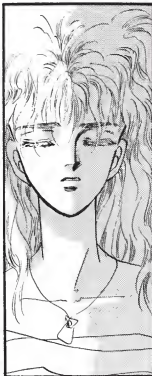






I'LL BE
TATARA
FROM
NOW ON.

I HAVE
TO
SHARE
IT WITH
EVERY-
ONE.



I WAS SO
HAPPY.



SHURI...

I'LL
NEVER
FORGET
THESE
PAST
FEW
DAYS...

...TRAVELING
TOGETHER.

I
AM
TATARA!

I'LL
TELL
MY-
SELF....



YOU'RE
OUR
SYMBOL!

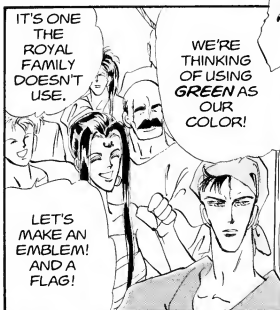
WE
NEED IT
GAUDY!

THERE'S EVEN
A SPACE
FOR
SHOWBISH!

WHAT'S
THIS?

ISN'T THIS
A LITTLE
GAUDY?

KCH



IT'S ONE
THE
ROYAL
FAMILY
DOESN'T
USE.

WE'RE
THINKING
OF USING
GREEN AS
OUR
COLOR!

LET'S
MAKE AN
EMBLEM!
AND A
FLAG!



TATA-
RA!

SOMETHING'S
HAPPENING ON
SHORE!

ARE WE
HEADING
STRAIGHT
BACK TO
SAKURAJIMA?

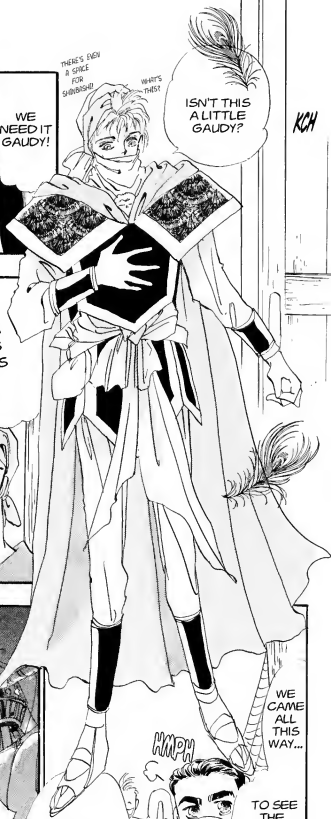
HMPH

WHEN'S
MY
TURN?

AND NOW
HE'S GONE
ALREADY!?

TO SEE
THE
BLUE
KING.

WE
CAME
ALL
THIS
WAY...





**THE
TRAITOR
MUST
DIE!**

HE
CAUSED
THE
FLOODS--

THUS
STEALING OUR
OPPORTUNITY
TO ATTACK--

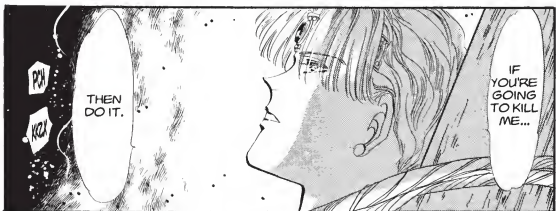
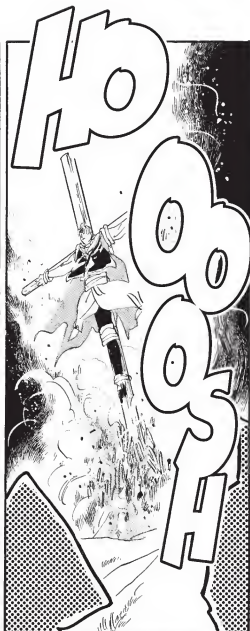
THEN TRIED TO
JOIN THE
REBELS!

HE'S THE
CAPTAIN
OF THE
ROYAL
GUARDS,

BUT HE
LET THE
BLUE
KING DIE!









BE
GLAD
HE'S
DEAD!

HA
HA
HA

THE KING
GOT WHAT
HE
DESERVED!



YAA
|

HAVE YOU
NO
LOYALTY!?

YAY
|

HOW
DARE
YOU!?



WAA

WAA

HSS

POP

DIE,
TRAITOR!



SOME-
ONE
HELP
HIM!

WAA

KOSH

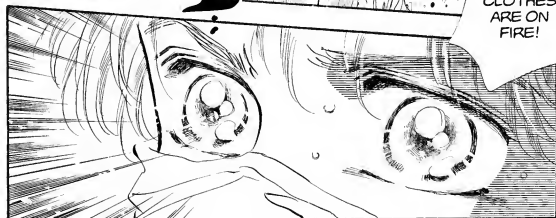
HSSH

KRAK

FISH

GOD-!

HIS
CLOTHES
ARE ON
FIRE!





PUT OUT
THE
FLAMES!







HE'LL
BE
FINE.

WE GOT
TO HIM
SOON
ENOUGH.

YOU'VE GOT
TO KICK HIM
OUT RIGHT
AWAY.

TATARA.

HE'LL
WAKE
SOON.

THE BURNS
WEREN'T
SERIOUS.



THE BLUE
KING...

DID HE DIE?



THANKS,
NAGI.



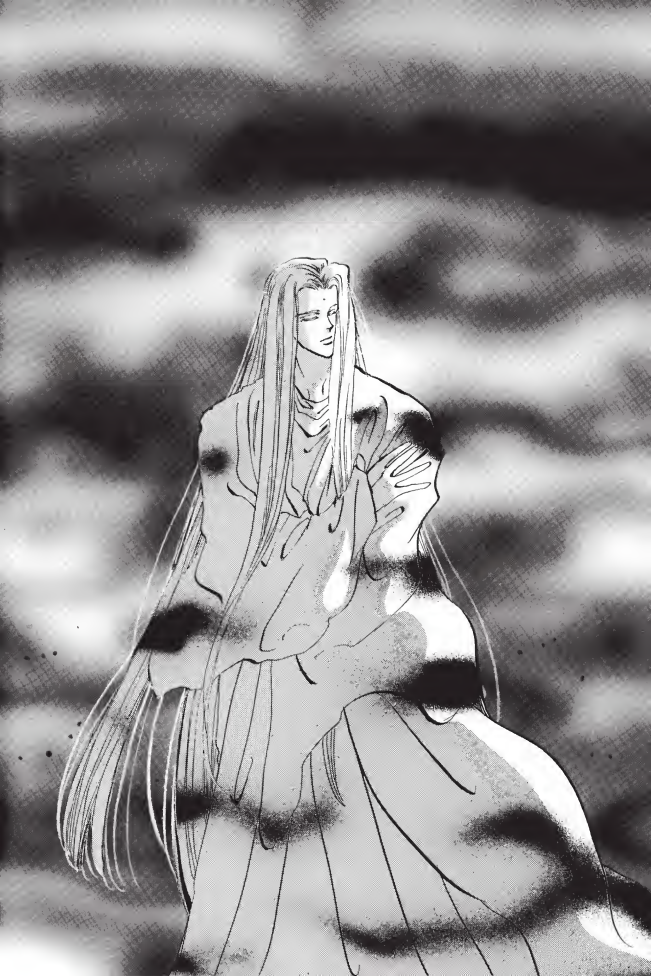
TATARA.



MAYBE...

BUT WOULD HE
REALLY DO ALL
THIS AS AN ACT...?







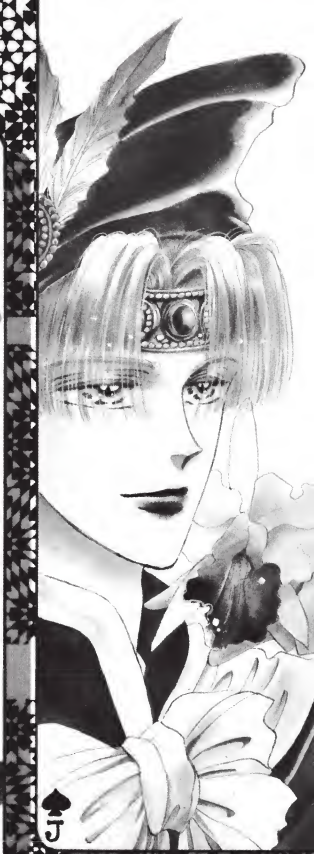
I FEEL AN EVIL
AURA...

TATARA...

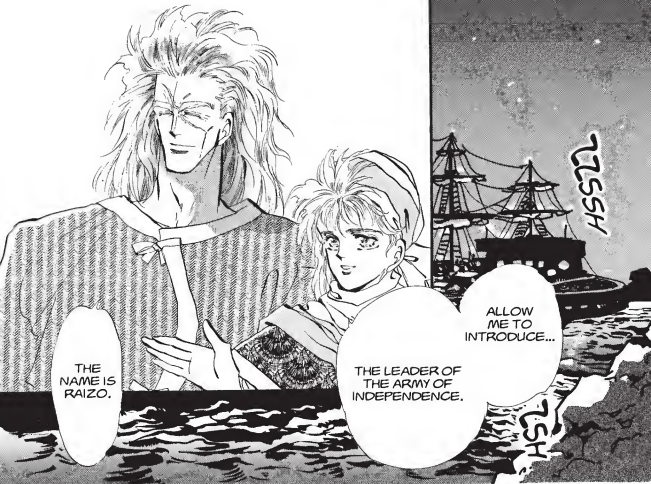


I FEEL
IT
CLOSING
IN ON
YOU...

...AN
INAUSPICIOUS
SHADOW.



AZURE TALE 2: JOKER



THE
NAME IS
RAIZO.

THE LEADER OF
THE ARMY OF
INDEPENDENCE.

ALLOW
ME TO
INTRODUCE...

TINY TAM-TAM TIME ②

Tam-Tam

Q&A:

What kind of art supplies do
you use?

What about for color art?

Um, for paper...

AH
Kent
150kg

I get the paper
shop to cut
them for me.
(They're thick.)



This is the India
ink I use.

My pens are Zebra G
pens and round pens
(the normal kinds).

For color, I use paper called Fabriano
Classico. (It's expensive.)
(But I use Carson mount boards, too.)

I color with Dr. Martin color inks.

When I use grayscale, I
use a Nouvelle color ink
called "cool gray."

I love it. ♥

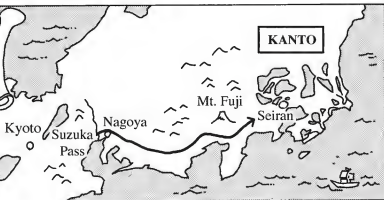


I also
use color
screen-
tones and
pastels.

Like
this.

TAMU.

SARASA'S JOURNEY



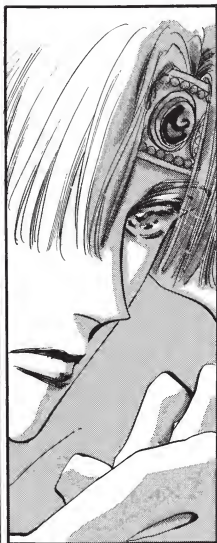


YOU LOOK...

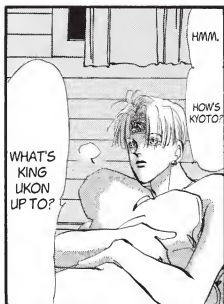


HELLO.









WHAT'S KING UKON UP TO?

HMM.

HOW'S KYOTO?



THERE WAS A GUARD BY THE DOOR.

WE HAD HIM FALL ASLEEP.



WE'VE COME TO HELP.

...BY SOMEONE YOU KNOW WELL.

WE'VE BEEN SENT...

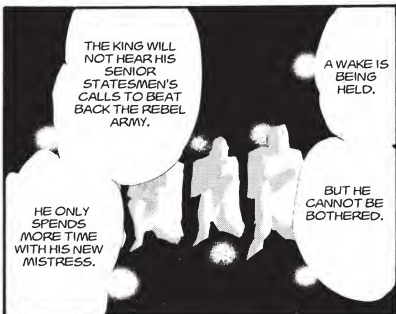


HMM.

THAT'S CONVENIENT.

I HAVE THINGS FOR YOU TO DO.

IN THAT CASE...



THE KING WILL NOT HEAR HIS SENIOR STATESMEN'S CALLS TO BEAT BACK THE REBEL ARMY.

HE ONLY SPENDS MORE TIME WITH HIS NEW MISTRESS.

A WAKE IS BEING HELD.

BUT HE CANNOT BE BOTHERED.



YES, SIR.

SEE WHAT THE BLACK KING IS UP TO.

BAMBOO, GO NORTH.



CHRYSANTHEMUM,
RETURN TO
KYOTO AND
SEND ME
REPORTS.

IT WILL
BE AN
HONOR,
SIR.

ORCHID,
YOU STAY
WITH ME.



**PLUM...
YOU GO
WEST.**

AND
ME,
SIR?



...OF
THE RED
KING.

I WANT YOU
TO FIND THE
ACHILLES
HEEL...



SOON...

SSK

SSH

SSH



THE BYAKKO
SWORD ISN'T
HERE.

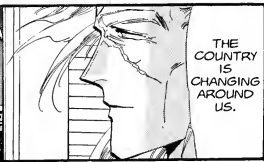
BUT WE
KNOW
WHERE IT
IS.



...AND
THE
SEIRYU
SWORD.

HERE IS THE
REFORGED
SUZAKU
SWORD...







YES!



BUT
ONE
DAY...

...TO
REBUILD
OUR
COUNTRY.

...WE
SHALL
FIGHT
TO-
GETHER...



WHAT
MATTERS
NOW--

IS FOR US
TO GET
BACK ON
OUR FEET
AND
REBUILD
THE CITY.

WE CAN'T
THINK
PAST THAT
YET.



RAIZO...

THANK YOU!



TATARA CAN'T BE WITHOUT A SWORD.



WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT TO BEHOLD.

YAY! YAY!





OH.
OF
COURSE!

I'VE NEVER
REALLY
HAD
LESSONS.

...I'M
ASHAMED
TO SAY
IT.

EVERY
MORNING
THEN.



WHILE
I'M HERE,
COULD
YOU...

RAIZO.

...TEACH
ME TO
FIGHT
WITH THE
SWORD?

WE'LL STAY
HERE FOR A
FEW DAYS
TO SEE
HOW
THINGS GO.

WHATEVER
THEY SAY
ABOUT
UNITY...



TREATIN'
ME LIKE A
KID!



TATARA'S
TOO
YOUNG,
TOO!

HMPH



HEY!

YOU'RE
TOO
YOUNG,
HAYATO.

AND YOU'RE
STILL, HURT.

I
WANNA
DRINK,
TOO!

THEY'RE A
BAND OF
ROGUES AND
TRAITORS IN
THE END.

JUST AS I
DID WITH
THE
SERPENT
KING...

...FOR ME
TO SLIP IN
LIKE A
WEDGE...

THERE'S
PLENTY OF
ROOM...

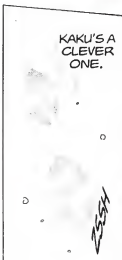
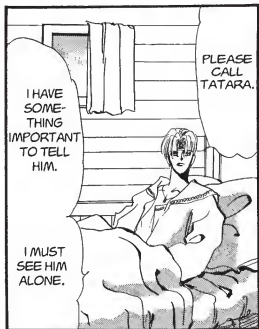
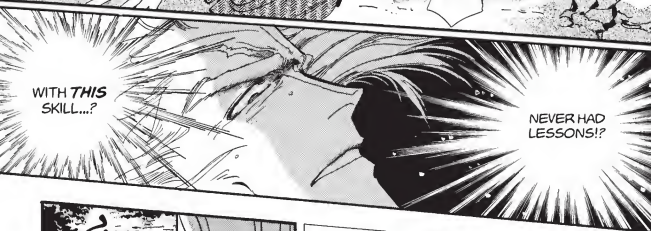
I'LL POUR
MY OWN
DRINK.



ZSH

ZSSH







WHAT
DID YOU
WANT
TO TELL
ME?



IT'S A
SECRET.
COME
CLOSER.



YOU
SEE...



WHAT?

CAN
YOU
HEAR?

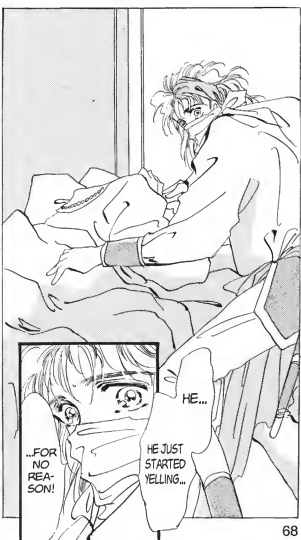
NO
PUSH-
ING!



I KNOW
THE
WHERE-
ABOUTS...

...OF THE
FOURTH
SWORD.





EVERY DAY.

EVERY DAY....

I...

I WAS TREATED WORSE THAN THE SLAVES.

NO SURPRISE.

I WISHED I COULD DIE.

YOU PROBABLY NEVER KNEW THIS.

BUT THE BLUE KING WAS A TWISTED MAN.

HE WAS... VERY FOND OF YOUNG BOYS.

AFTER ALL...

I WAS THE CAPTAIN OF THE BLUE KING'S GUARDS.



BUT...

I HAD NO FAMILY.

I COULD DO NOTHING!

NO ONE TO TURN TO!

NNNNNNNNNN
GGGGGGGGGG

HE ACTED LIKE HE RAN THE PLACE!

LIAR!

NING
GRR

IT DIDN'T LOOK THAT WAY.



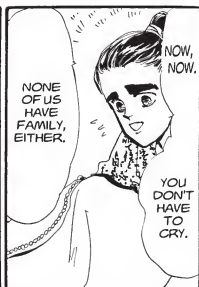
BUT
TATARA
SAVED
ME.

HE
SEEMED
LIKE A
GOD TO
ME.

I
THOUGHT
I WAS
GOING
TO
BURN
TO DEATH.



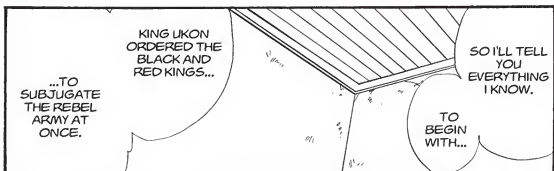
THANK
YOU.



NOW,
NOW.

NONE
OF US
HAVE
FAMILY,
EITHER.

YOU
DON'T
HAVE
TO
CRY.



KING UKON
ORDERED THE
BLACK AND
RED KINGS...

...TO
SUBJUGATE
THE REBEL
ARMY AT
ONCE.

SO I'LL TELL
YOU
EVERYTHING
I KNOW.

TO
BEGIN
WITH...



I DOUBT THE
RED KING
WOULD SEND
HIS TROOPS SO
FAR THIS WAY
EITHER.

BUT
THE BLACK
KING HAS
BEEN
FIGHTING THE
KAZUNO CLAN
IN THE
NORTHEAST
FOR YEARS.

HE CAN'T
AFFORD TO
ATTACK DOWN
HERE.



THE
RED
KING!?

WHAT!?



ARE THE
ONES
WITH THE
GENBU
SWORD.

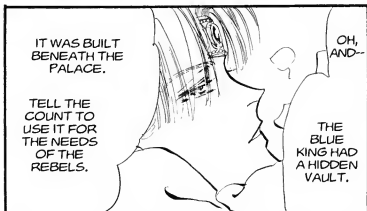
SO
RUMORS
SAY.

OH.

THE
KAZU-
NOS...

NO ONE WILL
COME TO
ATTACK FOR
A WHILE.

YOU
SHOULD
BUILD UP
TROOPS
AND RE-
SOURCES.



IT WAS BUILT
BENEATH THE
PALACE.

TELL THE
COUNT TO
USE IT FOR
THE NEEDS
OF THE
REBELS.

OH,
AND--

THE
BLUE
KING HAD
A HIDDEN
VAULT.

I'M SURE KING
UKON
DOESN'T
THINK THIS IS A
REAL THREAT.

HE'S
FOOLISH
THAT WAY.

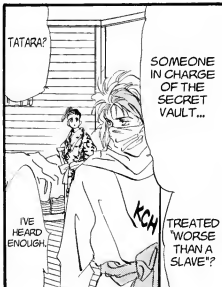


STAY
WITH ME
A LITTLE
LONGER.

I'M
LONELY.



TATARA...
WHAT'S
WRONG?

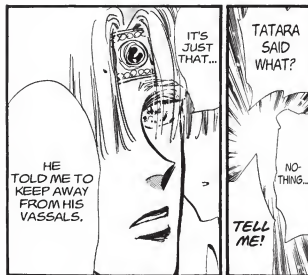


TATARA?

I'VE
HEARD
ENOUGH.

SOMEONE
IN CHARGE
OF THE
SECRET
VAULT...

TREATED
'WORSE
THAN A
SLAVE'?





PLAYING
THESE
GAMES!

I WANT
TO KILL
HIM!

I SHOULDN'T
HAVE SAVED
HIM!



WHAT WOULD
YOU DO IN THIS
CASE?

...SHURI.

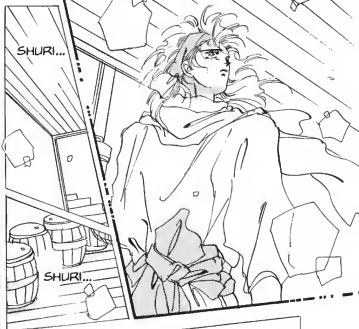
HEH

I CAN
ALMOST
HEAR IT.

...I'LL
BET.

KNOCK
HIM
DOWN--

AND
THROW
HIM
OUT!



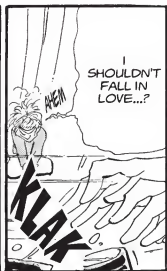
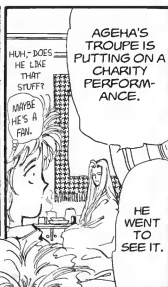
HE WAS
STRONG,
ARROGANT...
AND KIND.

I
REMEMBER
HIM
LAUGHING
AND
YELLING...

...YOU
COULD
BE BY MY
SIDE!

IF
ONLY...







...I GUESS I
SHOULDN'T...

TATARA
SHOULDN'T
BE SAYING
SUCH
THINGS.

I KNOW I
SHOULDN'T.



YOU
DON'T
KNOW
HIM.

NO.



THE ONE
KAKU TOLD
ME ABOUT?

AH!

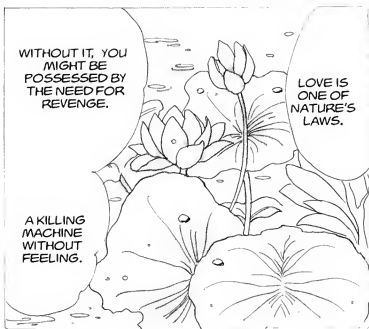
IS HE
THE
MONK
YOU
WERE ON
THE SHIP
WITH?



OH.

HOW CURIOUS.

HE'S NOT
REALLY A
MONK. HE'S A
DUMPLING
MERCHANT.



WITHOUT IT, YOU
MIGHT BE
POSSESSED BY
THE NEED FOR
REVENGE.

A KILLING
MACHINE
WITHOUT
FEELING.

LOVE IS
ONE OF
NATURE'S
LAWS.



YES, SIR.

DON'T
PRETEND
THAT WHAT IS
TRUE ISN'T.

BE
WHAT
YOU
ARE.



ABANDONING
ALL, HURTING
WHATEVER'S IN
YOUR PATH?

...MAKE YOU
OBLIVIOUS
TO ALL
AROUND
YOU?

WILL
THIS
LOVE....

IT ALL
DEPENDS ...

...ON
WHAT'S
IN
YOUR
HEART.

OR WILL IT MAKE
YOU A MORE
COMPLETE
PERSON?

ONE WHO
CAN FEEL
LOVE FOR
ALL THINGS?



...YES,
SIR.

HHE'S
SCARY.

AND GO
SOME-
WHERE
ELSE.

YOU'D
ONLY
MAKE
THINGS
WORSE
FOR
EVERY-
ONE.



IF IT'S THE
FORMER...

THEN I
WANT YOU
TO STOP
ACTING
UNDER
TATARA'S
NAME.

DEAR SHURI...

DEAR SHURI,

PBBT

I WAS
KNOWN AS
QUITE A
PLAYBOY IN
MY YOUTH.

HAK
KOF

NAGI...

HAVE YOU
EVER BEEN
IN LOVE?

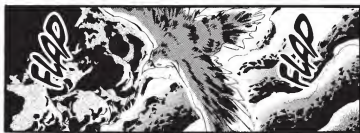
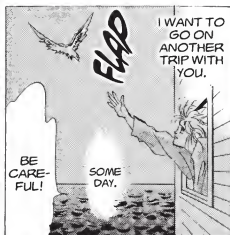
DID YOU GET BACK HOME ALL RIGHT?

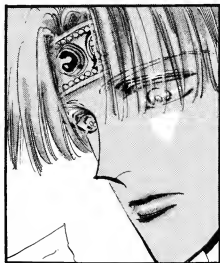
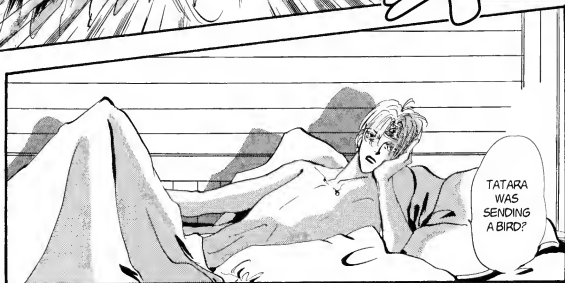
I DON'T KNOW IF THIS LETTER WILL REACH YOU, BUT--

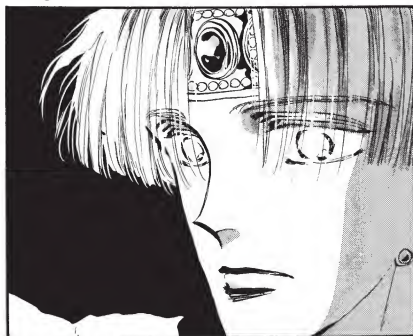
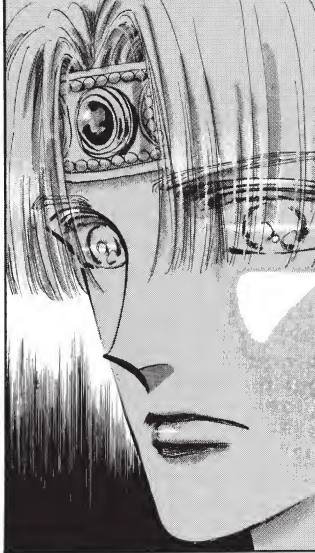
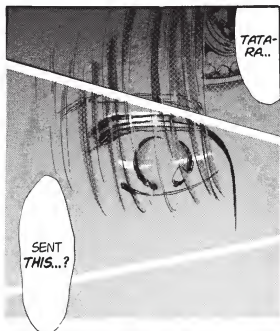
I WANT TO SEE
YOU SO MUCH.

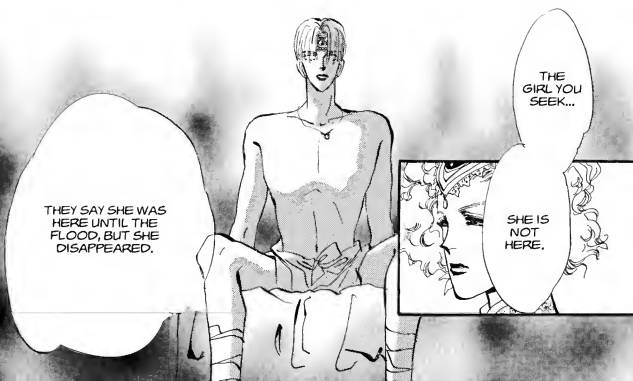
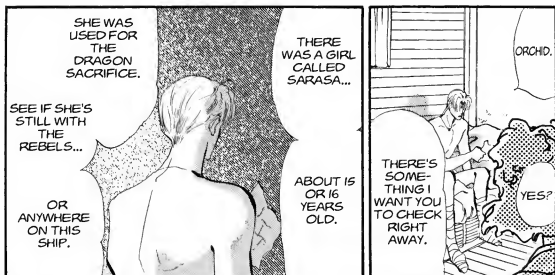
...IF I JUST HOPPED
TO THE NEAREST
HOT SPRINGS.

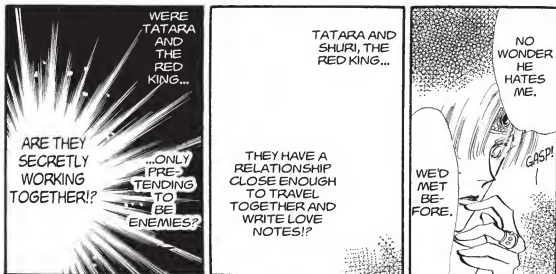
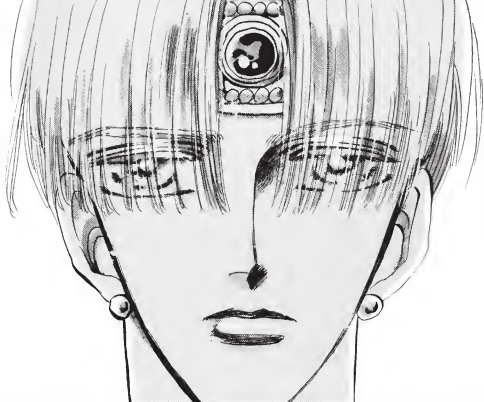
I WONDER IF
WE'D COME
ACROSS EACH
OTHER AGAIN...













THEN WHAT
COULD IT BE?

WHAT...?



NO.

THAT CAN'T
BE.

THAT'S
NOT
POSSIBLE.



THEY DON'T
KNOW...

RRRR

...WHO
THE
OTHER
REALLY
IS!

THEY
DON'T
KNOW!

MY
GOD!

HA...

HA...

THEY
FELL
IN
LOVE...

THEY'VE
KEPT THEIR
IDENTITIES
SECRET!

HEH,
HEH.

RRR

...AS AN
ORDINARY
MAN AND
WOMAN.

HEH.

HA!

IS A GIFT
FROM
HEAVEN!

THIS--

HA!

HA!



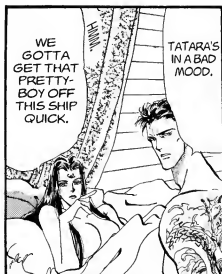


THIS IS THE SHIP'S GALLEY.



I'M DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN YOU'RE SOMEONE WHO'D WASTE FOOD.





THEY SHARE A CABIN.

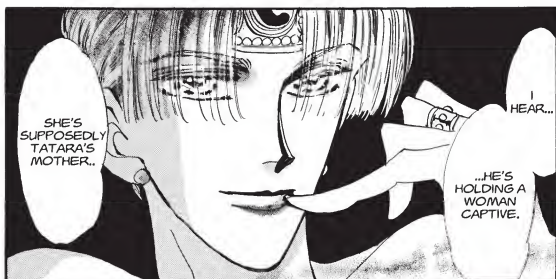




↳ BORROWED CLOTHES.



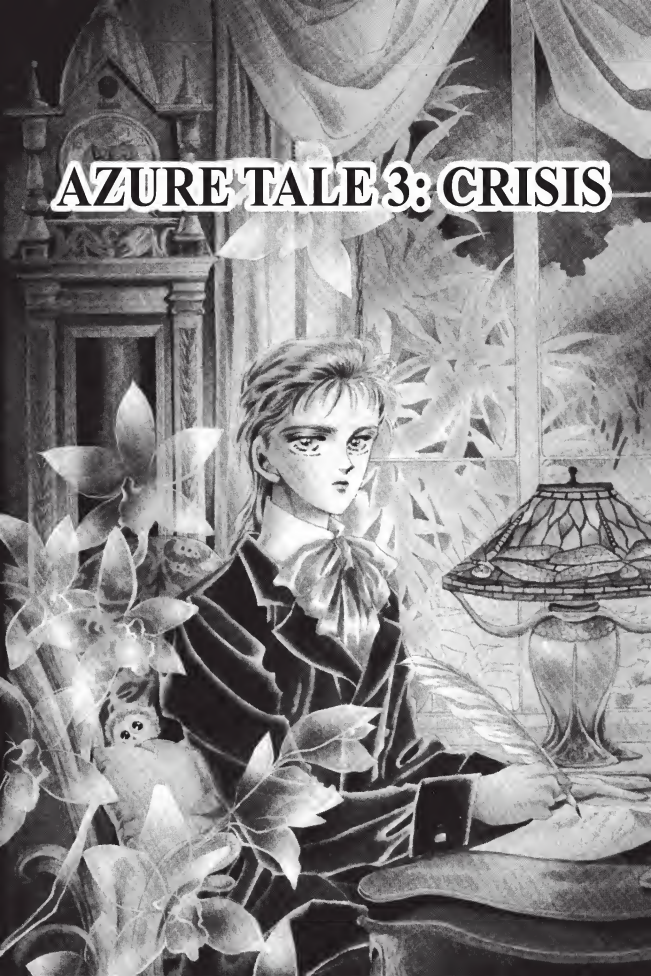






MY
MOTHER!?

AZURE TALE 3: CRISIS





...BY
GENERAL
KAZAN!?

MOTHER!

SHE'S BEEN
TAKEN
PRISONER...

TINY TAM-TAM TIME ③

Good
question! ?

Tam-Tam Q&A: What was "Old Kaku" called when he was young?

I don't know. Just plain Kaku, I guess. ?

He once said he was a man of the seas.

So he wasn't born in Byakko Village.

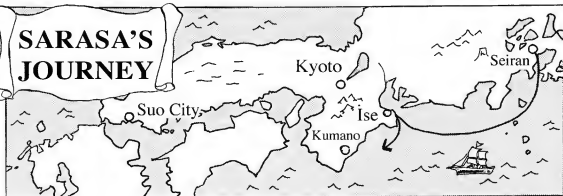
Who is this dude, really?

I WAS POPULAR
WITH THE
LADIES WHEN I
HAD A FULL
HEAD OF HAIR.

HE'S
LYING.

TAKU

SARASA'S JOURNEY





HE'S THE
ONE WHO
BEHEADED
MY
BROTHER!

GENERAL...

...KAZAN!

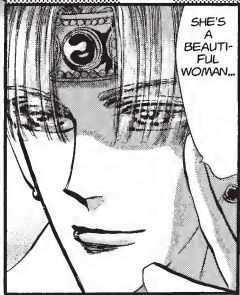
WE GOT
QUITE A BIT
OF INTELLI-
GENCE ON
THE RED
ARMY.



WE WERE AT
WAR WITH THE
RED KING
UNTIL A SHORT
WHILE AGO.



...WITH A
MOLE
ALONG
THE PATH
OF HER
TEARS...



SHE'S
A
BEAUTI-
FUL
WOMAN...



EVERYONE
HAS THEIR
HEARTS
SET ON
GOING
NORTH.

I CAN'T TELL
THEM TO GO
WEST FOR
PERSONAL
REASONS.



BUT I
SUPPOSE
THIS IS A
PERSONAL
MATTER.



I'M
SORRY, IT
WAS NO
BUSINESS
OF MINE.



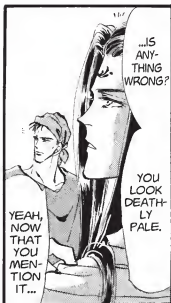
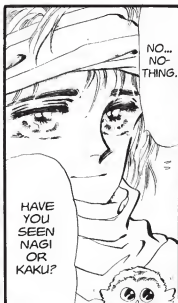
TATARA!

CAN YOU
EAT
IT?

WHAT'S
THAT?

I HEAR THEY
GET THIS
STUFF
CALLED
"SNOW."

HOW
COLD IS
IT UP
THERE?



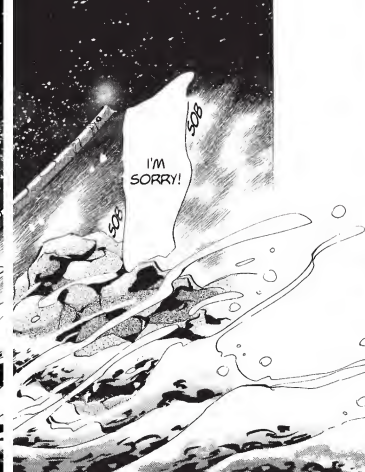
THAT
GENERAL WAS
LIKE A
DEMON...

MOM!

...LIKE A
RAGING
BEAST!

WHAT
COULD HE
BE DOING TO
HER NOW...!?





ALL THAT TIME I WAS FLIRTING WITH SHURI...

...SHE WAS SUFFERING!



HERE, HAVE A DRINK WITH US!

WE'LL MISS YOU WHEN YOU'RE GONE!



EASY, THERE...

GOOD.

THANKS SO MUCH FOR HELPING.

MOST OF THE RUBBLE'S BEEN CLEARED AWAY.



EVERYONE'S DOING THEIR JOBS NOW...



NOW DON'T USE THAT ARM FOR A WHILE, NEXT...!



NAGI!



I SHOULD BE HAPPY-

...IF IT MEANT BEING SPARED THOSE HORRORS!

KNOWING SHE'S ALIVE, AT LEAST.

BUT I ALMOST WISH SHE WEREN'T...



I CAN
GET YOU
GOOD
SEATS.

WE'RE
ABOUT TO
START A
PERFORM-
ANCE.
WILL YOU
COME?

AH...

TATARA.

AGEHA...



I HAVE TO GO
SAVE HER
MYSELF!



ABOUT A
RELATIVE
OF MINE...

AGEHA...

...KEPT
CAPTIVE
BY THE
RED
ARMY IN
SUO.

HAVE YOU
HEARD ANY
RUMORS...?



GOING
NORTH,
ARE
YOU?

CALL
ME
KICHO,
DEAR!

♡

I HEAR
YOU'RE
LEAVING
US
TOMOR-
ROW.

YEAH...

♣ LIVING THE ROLE.



SHP



OH,
NEVER
MIND.

IT'S
NO-
THING.

NO...

A
RELATIVE?
WHO?



THAT'S
WHAT
FRIENDS
ARE FOR.

YOU MIGHT
MAKE THE
WRONG
DECISION.

YOU
CAN'T
KEEP
EVERY-
THING TO
YOURSELF.

TO
SHARE
THE
GOOD...

...AND
THE BAD.



BUT
AGEHA...

THIS HAS
NOTHING TO
DO WITH
THEM.

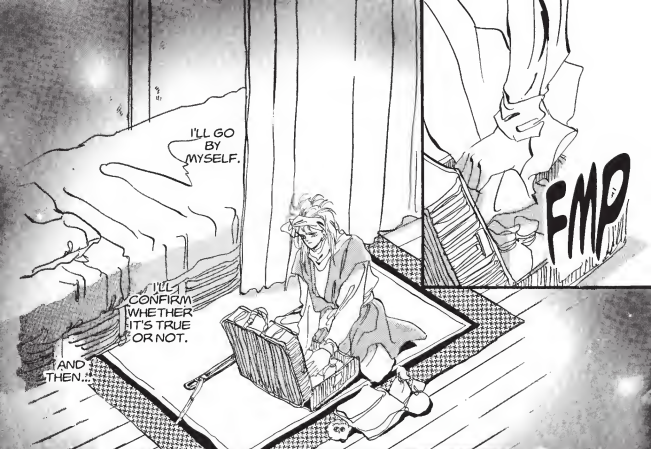
BE
STRONG.

THEY'RE ALL
WORRIED
ABOUT YOU,
YOU KNOW.

SLAP

GOT
IT?

ENOUGH
WITH THE
LONG FACE.



I'LL GO
BY
MYSELF.

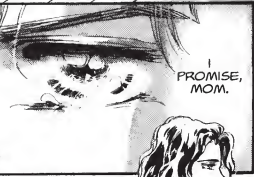
I'LL
CONFIRM
WHETHER
IT'S TRUE
OR NOT.

I AND
THEN...

FMP



I'LL SAVE
YOU, NO
MATTER
WHAT!



I
PROMISE,
MOM.



STAY
ALIVE
UNTIL
THEN.



JUST
PLEASE...



FMP



SHOULD
I TELL
EVERY-
ONE.

GUESS
WHAT!?

HEY,
ALL!



YOU'D
BETTER
GET OFF
THIS SHIP-
SOON!

BUT I'M
THE
ONE
WHO
TOLD
YOU

YOU'RE
SO
COLD.



I CAN
HELP
YOU.

WANT
ME TO
GO WITH
YOU?



HE'S
PACKED
ALL HIS
THINGS!

TATARA
SAYS--

HE'S
GOING
OFF BY
HIMSELF!

YOU
IDIOT!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING!?

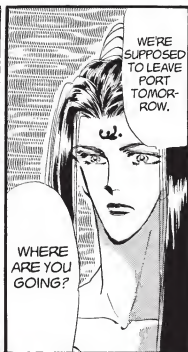
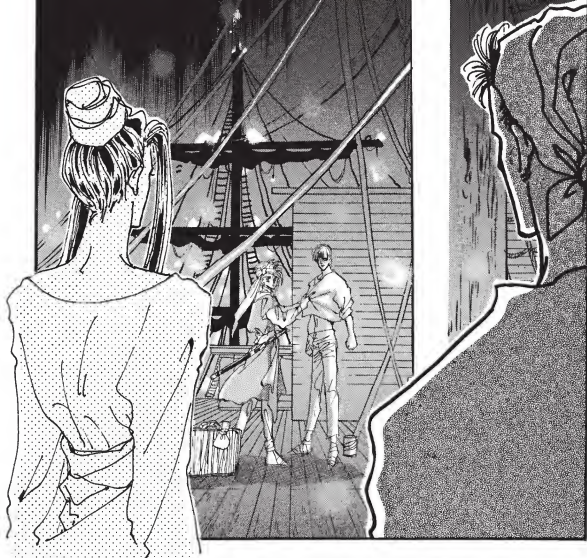


WHAT'S
THE
RACKET?

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

HE'S
TAKING
OFF IN
THE
NIGHT!

TATA-
RA?





WHY!?

DO YOU
THINK YOU
DON'T NEED
US?

YOU
WENT
TO
KANTO
ON
YOUR
OWN
LAST
TIME.

NOW
YOU'RE
DOING IT
AGAIN!?



HE HAS
NOTHING
TO EXPLAIN
TO HIS
VASSALS.

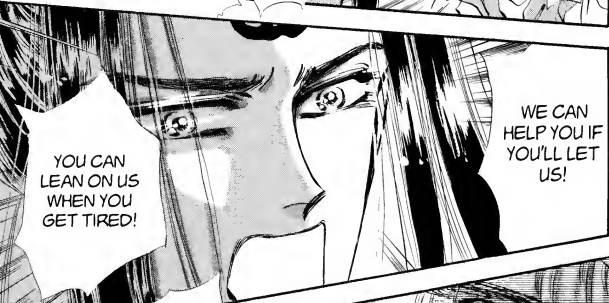
HAYA-
TO!?

WHEN YOU TOOK
OFF TO KANTO BY
YOURSELF!?

WHAT
COULD WE
THINK--

YOU
MIGHT
AS
WELL
HAVE!

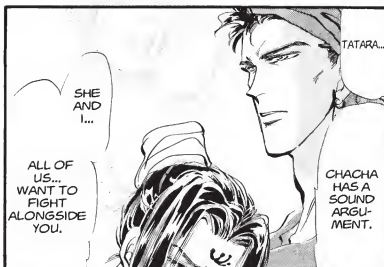
CHACHA!
THAT'S
NOT
WHAT I
SAID!



YOU CAN
LEAN ON US
WHEN YOU
GET TIRED!

WE CAN
HELP YOU IF
YOU'LL LET
US!

WHY WON'T
YOU LET US
HELP YOU!?



SHE
AND
I...

ALL OF
US...
WANT TO
FIGHT
ALONGSIDE
YOU.

TATARA...

CHACHA
HAS A
SOUND
ARGU-
MENT.



ZAKI!
WHY
AREN'T
YOU
ANGRY!?

CHA-
CHA...



THEY WERE
FREED
FROM THE
SHOJO
THANKS TO
YOU.

EVEN
THE
SUZAKU
PEOPLE--

BUT THAT'S
THE PAST
NOW.

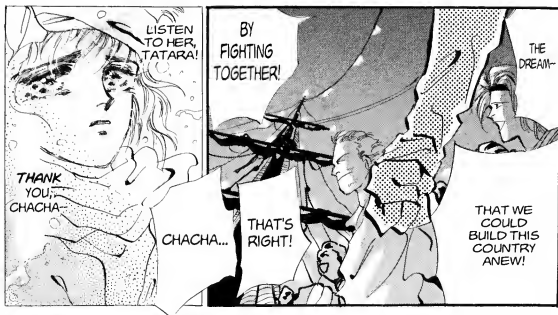
WE WERE
PROUD
PIRATES.



OF
HELPING
CHANGE
HISTORY!

YOU GAVE
US
SOMETHING
NEW TO BE
PROUD
ABOUT!

THE
HONOR--



LISTEN
TO HER,
TATARA!

BY
FIGHTING
TOGETHER!

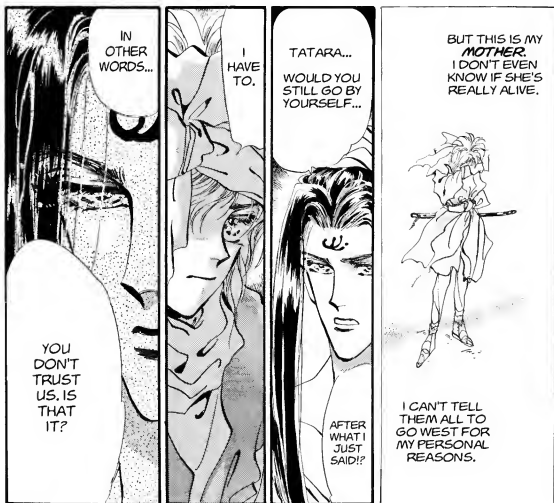
THE
DREAM-

THANK
YOU,
CHACHA-

CHACHA...

THAT'S
RIGHT!

THAT WE
COULD
BUILD THIS
COUNTRY
ANEW!



IN
OTHER
WORDS...

I
HAVE
TO.

TATARA...
WOULD YOU
STILL GO BY
YOURSELF...

BUT THIS IS MY
MOTHER.
I DON'T EVEN
KNOW IF SHE'S
REALLY ALIVE.

YOU
DON'T
TRUST
US, IS
THAT
IT?

AFTER
WHAT I
JUST
SAID!?

I CAN'T TELL
THEM ALL TO
GO WEST FOR
MY PERSONAL
REASONS.





YOU CAN
LEAVE OVER
MY DEAD
BODY!

COME
ON!

PICK UP
YOUR
SWORD!



THIS
WAS SO
EASY.

HEY

JUST AS I
THOUGHT...
STILL
PIRATES
AT HEART.

OOH

CHACHA!
STOP IT!

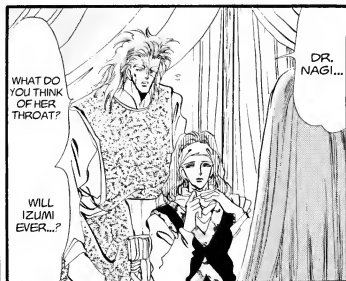
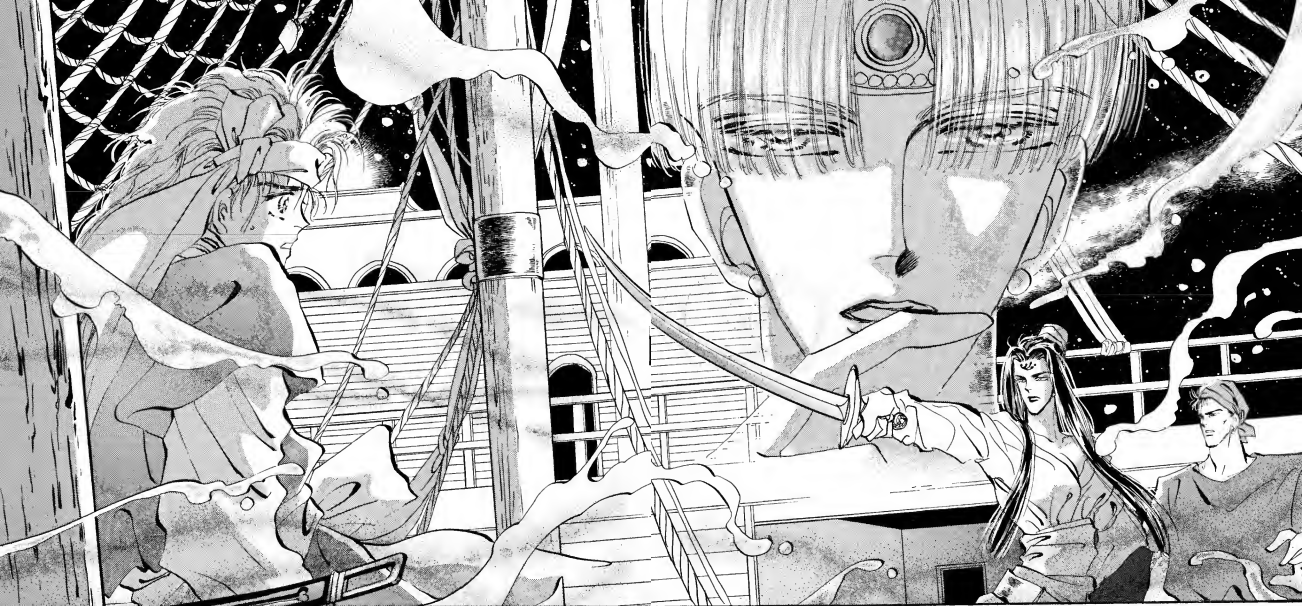
YESH

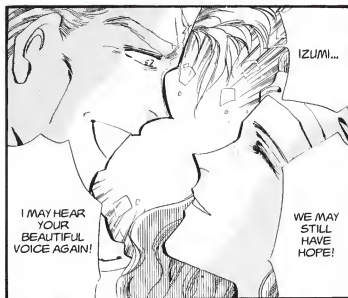


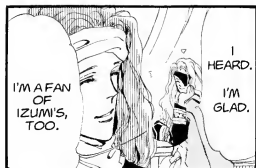
...MY ENTRANCE
LOOK ALL THE
BETTER.

WHICH
JUST
MAKES...











IF TATARA
LETS
ASAGI
CONTROL
HIM...

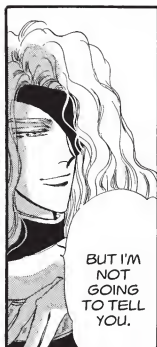
...THEN
SHAME ON
TATARA.

IT'S NOT MY
BUSINESS.

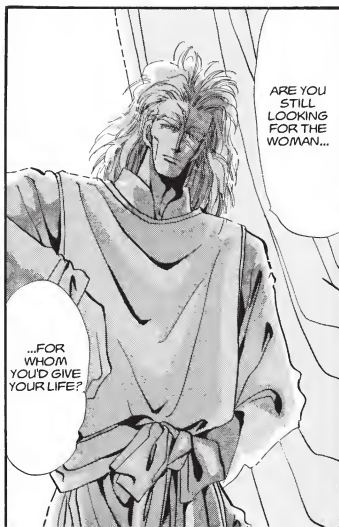


FIGURED.
YOU
ARE
AN
OLD
FOX.

I JUST FEEL
SORRY FOR
ASAGI.



BUT I'M
NOT
GOING
TO TELL
YOU.



ARE YOU
STILL
LOOKING
FOR THE
WOMAN...

...FOR
WHOM
YOU'D GIVE
YOUR LIFE?



DON'T
YOU
FEEL
SORRY
FOR
HIM?

YOU'RE SO
TOUGH ON
TATARA.

I
DON'T
KNOW.



GOODBYE,
FOR NOW.

WE'LL BE
PERFORMING
FOR A COUPLE
MORE DAYS, SO
COME SEE US.

AGE-
HA...



.....
I
SEE.

GOOD
LUCK...
GIFT TO
MANKIND.

I
HAVE SOME
PROSPECTS.



...ALL OF US...



...WANDER IN SEARCH OF OUR DESTINED PARTNER.



IS HE
PLANNING
TO DO THE
SAME TO
TATARA?!

THAT
CAN'T
HAPPEN...

NO.
TATARA HAS
GOOD
FRIENDS.



IT
WAS
ASAGI...

HE
DESTROYED
THE BLUE
KING.



HE LEFT
ONLY
ASAGI BY
HIS SIDE.



BUT
AT
SOME
POINT...

...HE
STOPPED
LISTENING TO
HIS WELL-
MEANING
STATESMEN.



WHEN THE
YOUNG ASAGI
CAME HERE...

...THE
BLUE
KING
HAD
ONLY
JUST
COME
OF AGE.

THOUGH
NOT WISE,
HE WAS A
SERIOUS
LAD.



I
HOPE...

...THIS
FEELING IN
MY GUT IS
NO GAUGE.



...A
SHOOTING
STAR...

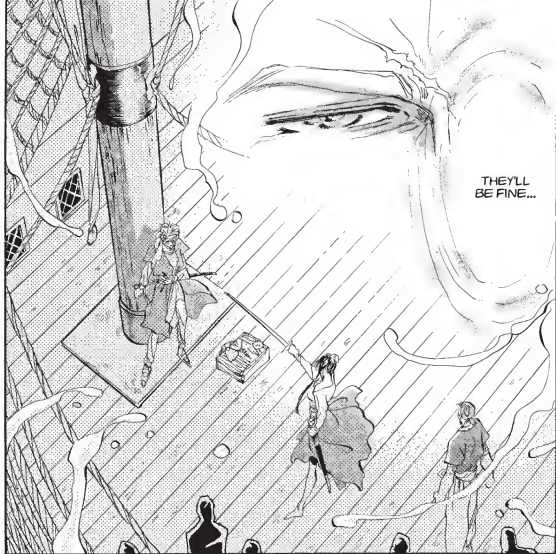
IT
COULD
BE A
GOOD
OMEN
OR AN
ILL
ONE...



OH.

A
SHOOT-
ING
STAR.

THEY SAY
THAT
MEANS
SOME-
ONE'S
ABOUT
TO DIE.



THEY'LL
BE FINE...



THIS IS
NO
GAME!

PREPARE
YOURSELF!

NO!

I CAN'T
POINT A
SWORD AT
YOU,
CHACHA!

COME
ON!

I TOLD
YOU TO
FIGHT
ME!



...ONLY
TRYING TO
SAVE HIS
MOTHER!

EVERY-
ONE...

TATARA
WAS ONLY...

MOTHER?

I
THOUGHT
SHE
DIED...

NAGI!

WHAT'S
GOING
ON
HERE?

...IN
SUO
CITY.

SHE'S
BEING
HELD BY
GENERAL
KAZAN...

WE
LEARNED
THAT SHE'S
BEEN
CAPTURED.

ASAGI!

STOP
THIS!

TATARA!



I DIDN'T
WANT TO
CAUSE
EVERYONE
TROUBLE...



SLAP

TRUBLE!?

SLAP

SLAP



YOU
SHOULD
HAVE
JUST
SAID
SO!



CHACHA...

YOU HAVE TO
LEARN TO
DEPEND ON
US!



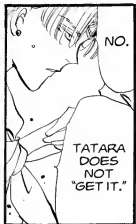
...AND DO
AWAY WITH
THE
GENERAL...

...WE CAN
DISMEM-
BER THE
RED
KING'S
FORCES.

GENERAL
AL
KAZAN...

IS ONE OF THE TRUSTED AIDES OF THE RED KING.

...ALONG
WITH
ASHO...



TATARA
DOES
NOT
"GET IT."



LET'S
HEAD
WEST!

NONE,
CHACHA!

EVERY-
BODY!

ANY
OBJECTIONS!?

HE'S
RIGHT!

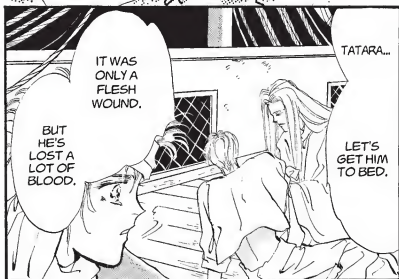
YEAH!

LET'S GET
TATARA'S
MOTHER
BACK--

LET'S BEAT
THIS
GENERAL
KAZAN!

AND TEACH
THE RED
KING A
LESSON!

TO THE
WEST!



IT WAS
ONLY A
FLESH
WOUND.

BUT
HE'S
LOST A
LOT OF
BLOOD.

TATARA...

LET'S
GET HIM
TO BED.



YOUR
MOTHER'S
ALIVE!

SNIF
SOB

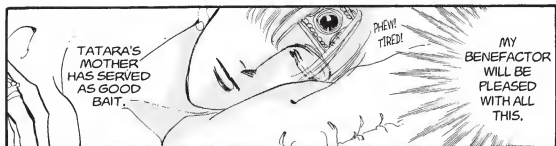
TA...

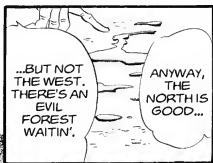
TATA-
RA, I'M...
SO
HAPPY
FOR
YOU!

I'M
SO
GLAD!

HAYATO...









RAISE
ANCHOR!

7SH

LET'S
GET
GOING!

WE'RE
HEADING
WEST!

THE SHIP
SAILS
WEST.



GOING AGAINST
THE BLACK
CURRENT...

...ITS
HEADWAY
WILL BE
SLOWED.

THERE'S NO
FOREST IN
THE WEST...

7SS2



IT'S
GOOD
NEWS...

IF ONLY
ONE OF US
WILL DO.



ZAKI...

WE
KNOW IT
WON'T
BE YOU.



DON'T
LISTEN TO
HER FOR-
TUNES.

THEY'RE
NEVER
RIGHT.



BUT
THAT
FEELS SO
LONG
AGO.

I CAME
HERE
WITH
SHURI...

TATARA!
HEY,
TATARA!



CHACHA!

WE GOT A
MOUNTAIN
OF
LOBSTERS!

YA, HAI
LOBSTER!

THE WATER
SUPPLY MUST
BE
REPLENISHED
IN ISE, THE
NEUTRAL
ZONE.

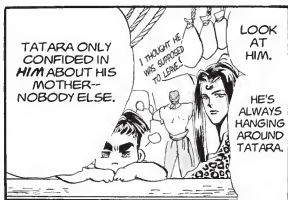
HAVE WE
GOT
ENOUGH
WATER!?



I ASKED
PEOPLE
AROUND
TOWN...

KUMANO?

THEY SAID
KING UKON
IS COMING
TO
KUMANO.



TATARA ONLY
CONFIDED IN
HIM ABOUT HIS
MOTHER—
NOBODY ELSE.

I THOUGHT HE
WAS SUPPOSED
TO LEAVE.

LOOK
AT
HIM.

HE'S
ALWAYS
HANGING
AROUND
TATARA.



WEE!

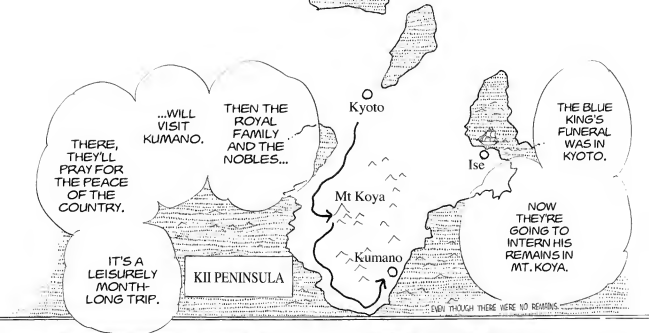
HEH
HEH



YOU'RE
STILL
SULKING?

HMPH

I DON'T
LIKE
HIM.





SOME-
TIMES IT'S
EASIER FOR
WOMEN TO
SNEAK
AROUND.

AND, NO,
YOU
WOULDN'T.

I DIDN'T
MEAN
YOU'D
BE THE
SCOUT...



WOULD I
PASS FOR
A
PEDDLER?

TATARA!

HOW
DO I
LOOK?



PLAY
ALONG.

CHACHA
LIKES TO BE
USEFUL.

ZAKI...



WE'LL
DROP
YOU IN
SHIKOKU.

YEAH!
HISHA CAN
BE OUR
MESSENGER.

THEN WE'LL
WAIT FOR
YOUR WORD
IN KUMANO.



YOU
BET!



OH,
ALL
RIGHT.

GOOD
LUCK,
AND
THANKS.



SUO CITY

WE MUST
REORGAN-
IZE OUR
TROOPS
QUICKLY--

NO,
GENERAL
KAZAN.

WE SHOULDN'T
STRAY FAR
BEFORE WE'VE
RECOVERED
FULLY FROM
THE BLUE
KING'S
ATTACKS.

AND
DESTROY
TATARA'S
ARMY ON
SAKURAJIMA!

I'M NOT ALL
BRAWN AND NO
BRAIN, IF
THAT'S WHAT
YOU MEAN!

ASHO!
I ALWAYS KNEW
YOU WERE A
COWARD!

SHE'S
NEVER
BEEN SO...
FORWARD.

WHAT'S GOT INTO HER?

THIS IS
EMBAR-
RASSING...

DEAREST SHURI,

I MISS YOU SO MUCH
I CAN'T SLEEP.

Dearest Shuri,

I WANT TO BE BACK IN YOUR EMBRACE.

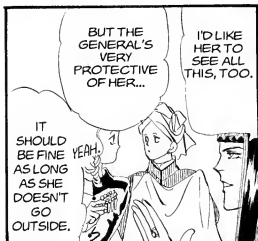
I LOVE YOU.

SARASA





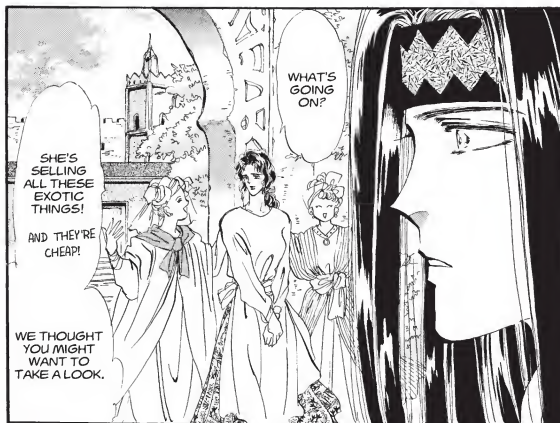
GENERAL KAZAN'S ESTATE.





AZURE TALE 4: BONDS





TINY TAM-TAM TIME ④

Tam-Tam

Q&A:

Did you have a job before you became a manga artist?

Until quite recently, I worked as an assistant both before and after I turned pro.

I was also a waitress in a café in my senior year of high school.



I was pretty shy, so I had a hard time speaking up.

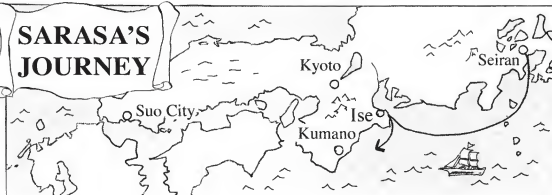
"Welcome" and "Have a nice day" were tough.

I felt pretty pathetic. ☹

I always admired people who had no problems with customer relations.

TAMU

SARASA'S JOURNEY





...IF SHE'S
TATARA'S
MOTHER.

I DON'T
EVEN
NEED TO
ASK...



THEY
LOOK
SO
MUCH
ALIKE.



...HER
TO BE
LOCKED
AWAY IN A
PRISON OR
SOME-
THING!

DON'T
WORRY,
THERE'S
PLENTY
MORE.

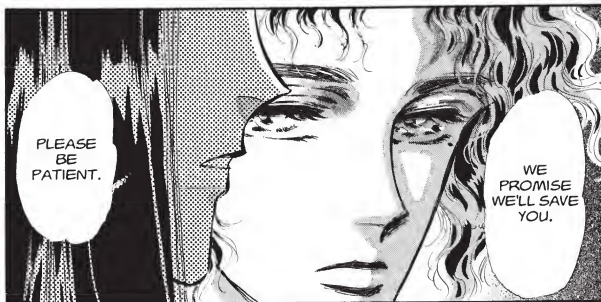
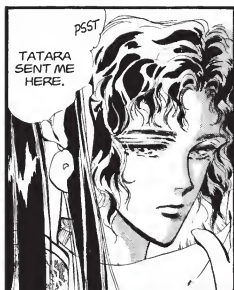
BUT I
EXPECTED...

I WANT THIS
CLOTH!

OO!
OO!

I SAW IT
FIRST!

LEGGO!





A
PAPER
BIRD?

OH!
THAT'S
LOVELY!
WHAT IS
IT?



...COULD
YOU GIVE
THIS TO
HER?

FOLD
HERE...

CHACHA...

IF YOU SEE
MY
MOTHER...

WOW,
TATARA, YOU
MAKE IT LOOK
SO
EFFORTLESS.
WHAT IS IT?



IT WOULD BE
DANGEROUS
TO SEND ANY
MESSAGES.

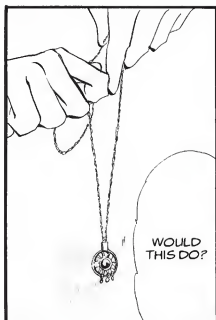
BUT SHE'LL KNOW
IT'S FROM ME
WHEN SHE SEES
THIS.

THEY
WOULD
STOP MY
TEARS.

WHEN I
WAS
LITTLE...

MY
MOTHER
WOULD
MAKE ONE
FOR ME
WHEN I
CRIED.

WITH CLOTH
AND STUFF.





WE
HAVE
A
DEAL!

I'LL GET
THIS TO
TATARA!



SHE'S SMART.
SHE KEEPS
HER HEAD.

I WOULDN'T
EXPECT
ANYTHING
LESS FROM
YOUR
MOTHER!

TATARA!



YOU'LL
BE SO
HAPPY!

I CAN
SEE IT
NOW.

TATARA!



I'LL WAIT
FOR
NIGHT-
FALL...

I WISH I
COULDN'T
TALKED
TO HER
MORE.



ALL RIGHT,
LADIES, I
GOT
PLENTY TO
GO
AROUND!

I WANT
ONE,
TOO!

I'LL BUY
THIS--SO
CAN YOU
THROW IN
THIS PRETTY
ONE?

ME,
TOO!

THE RED PALACE

I WANT TO
BUILD AN
UNDERGROUND
WATERWAY.

THIS IS A
PLAN THAT'S
BEEN LONG
DELAYED.

LOOK AT
THESE
DIAGRAMS.

YES,
SIRE!

YOU MAY
USE ALL
THE
MONEY
AND MEN
YOU NEED.

I
SWEAR
UPON
MY
LIFE!

GET
TO
WORK!

SAKAKI, I
WANT YOU TO
OVERSEE IT
ALL.

ME,
SIRE?

WHAT?

IT WILL BE A
MAJOR
UNDERTAKING.

TELL
THEM
I'M BUSY!

WHO
IS
IT!?

SHOO!

SOMEONE
REQUESTS
AN
AUDIENCE
WITH YOU...

SIRE...

THERE WILL
BE NO MORE
DROUGHT IN
THE
WESTERN
LANDS.

WE'LL GET
WATER TO ALL
THE REACHES
OF THE
DESERT.



MY
PARDON
FOR
KEEPING
YOU
WAITING.

SHFF

A
PRIN-
CESS,

FROM
DAZAIFU,
CALLED
SENJU.

IT'S BEEN
A LONG
TIME,
PRINCESS
SENJU.

TK
TK
TK

THIS IS
QUITE A
JOURNEY
FOR AN
EXPECTANT
MOTHER.
WHAT'S
WRONG?



PLEASE...

PLEASE,
YOU MUST
HELP ME.

I...

I HAD NO
CHOICE BUT
TO SEEK HELP
FROM YOU, MY
LORD...

I KNOW I
MAY BE
ASKING TOO
MUCH, BUT...



I DON'T
BLAME
THEM.

HE WAS AN
ONLY CHILD.

SO HIS
PARENTS
WANT TO
ADOPT
THE CHILD
ONCE I'VE
GIVEN BIRTH.

WE WERE
SEPARATED
FOREVER-
MORE...

LORD
SHIDO
AND I...

BEFORE
WE WERE
OFFICIALLY
MARRIED.



IT'S
TOO
CRUEL!

BUT...
THEY
TOLD
ME...

TO FORGET
EVERYTHING
AND FIND
SOMEONE
ELSE TO
MARRY!



THIS
CAN'T BE
GOOD
FOR THE
UNBORN
CHILD.

THE
PRINCESS
HAS BEEN
CRYING DAY
AND NIGHT.

PLEASE
HELP
US,
SIRE.



BUT YOU MAY
HAVE THE
BABY HERE IF
YOU WANT.

I CAN
UNDER-
STAND
SHIDO'S
PARENTS'
FEELINGS.

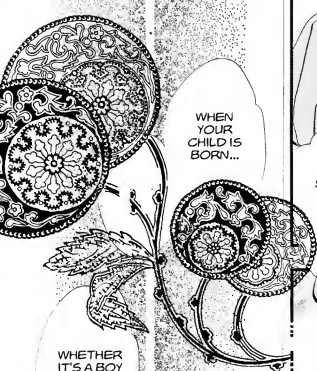
READY THE
SOUTH *PEONY*
SUITE FOR THE
PRINCESS!



I CANNOT
PART
WITH MY
CHILD!



NEVER!



WHEN
YOUR
CHILD IS
BORN...

WHETHER
IT'S A BOY
OR A GIRL...

IT
WOULD BE
GOOD TO
HAVE A
SUCCESSOR
TO SHIDO'S
WORK.

THIS CHILD
CAN TAKE
CHARGE OF
BUILDING THE
CITY.

I WILL
SERVE AS
THE
FOSTER
FATHER.

SHIDO'S
CHILD IS
AS GOOD
AS MY
OWN.

THANK
YOU SO
MUCH!

SIRE...

THEY
SAY IF A
CHILD'S
NAME
CONTAINS
THE
CHARACTER
FOR
"STREET,"

HE WILL
BUILD
THINGS.

"SHI-DO"
CONTAINS
THAT
CHARACTER.

WE'RE
BUILDING
AN
UNDER-
GROUND
WATERWAY...

BASED ON
PLANS
SHIDO LEFT
BEHIND.

A LAND
OF
VERDANT
FIELDS.

WILL BE
PASSED
DOWN,
SHIDO!

A CITY
LINED
WITH
CHERRY
TREES.

OUR
DREAM...

IT MAY
BREED
RUMORS.

...THAT
PERHAPS
THE CHILD
IS YOURS.

SIRE, NONE
WOULD
QUESTION
YOUR
MAGNANIMITY...

WHAT'S
THAT,
ASHO!?

BUT IS
THIS
WISE?



SAY THAT
ONE
MORE
TIME!

I DARE
YOU TO
SAY IT!

AGGGH!

GAH!

WHAT'S
WRONG!?

CAN'T
YOU SAY
IT!?

GUH...

UHH...

GASP!

CUT OUT
THEIR
TONGUES!

DO
YOU
HEAR!

IF
ANYONE
SHOULD
SPREAD
SUCH
RUMORS--

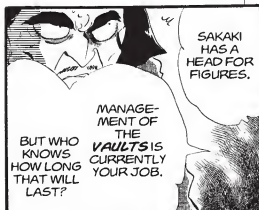
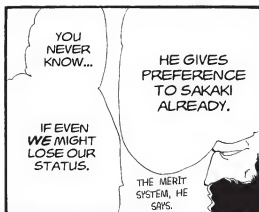
NOT ONLY
HAVE YOU
INSULTED
ME--

COME,
SAKAKI!

HAK
WEEZ

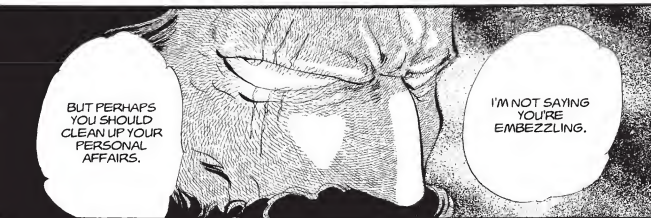
STAND
ASIDE,
ASHO!

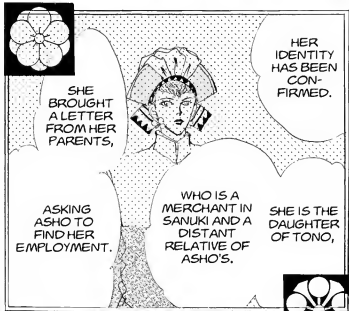
BUT YOU'VE
JUST
INSULTED
SHIDO!



...HOW THE RED KING ONCE KILLED ALL SUBORDINATES...

WHO DID NOT LIVE UP TO HIS EXPECTATIONS?







SHUT
UP!

LORD ASHO,
YOU MUSTN'T
CARRY ON
LIKE THIS.

CURSE
IT
ALL!

THIS IS
NONE OF
YOUR
BUSINESS,
UMEWAKA!



FOR
WASTING
MY LIFE IN
THIS
BARREN
DESERT!

SINCE HE
WAS A
SNOT-
NOSED
BRAT!

GRR...

THIS IS HOW
I'M REWARDED
FOR THE
YEARS OF
LOOKING
AFTER HIM—



AND
KAZAN!



I'LL KILL A
COUPLE OF
THE MANGY
CURS!

KLUNK

HIC

YARRH!



QUIET!
YOU
BLASTED
HOUNDS!

ARRHH!

HE THINKS
THE KING
FAVORS
HIM...!?

DAMN
HIM!

WUF WUF
WUF WUF
WUF WUF
WUF WUF







SHE IS TONO'S
DAUGHTER, THE
MERCHANT
FROM SANUKI.

AUGH!

I KILLED HER
AND BURIED
HER...

...SO THAT I
MIGHT TAKE
HER PLACE.

WHO
ARE
YOU!?

WHO--

UME...
WAKA!?

THE BLUE
KING HAS
SENT ME.





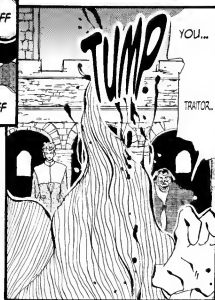


LORD...

ASHO...

L...

GAH!



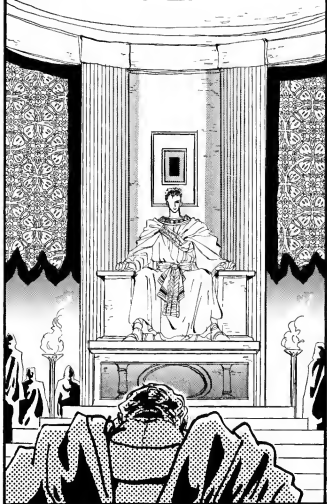


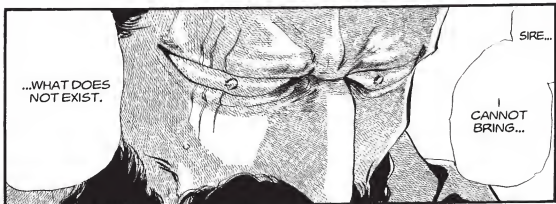
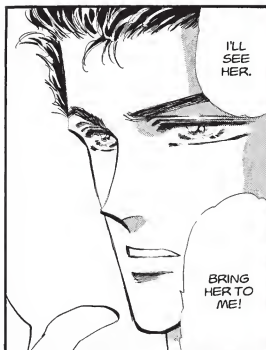
LORD
ASAGI...

...BETWEEN
KAZAN AND
ASHO WAS
THE PERFECT
PLACE...

IT WAS
ALL
TOO
EASY.

...TO
DRIVE A
WEDGE
IN THE
RED
ARMY.







ANSWER
ME,
KAZAN!

AM I
RIGHT!?



PER-
HAPS...

YOU
WERE
PLANNING
TO WIN
HER OVER
AND USE
HER FOR
OUR
BENEFIT.

WERENT
YOU?



ER...

UM...



NO
MATTER
WHAT YOU
MAY SAY...

...WHAT I
DO NOT
KNOW.

I
CAN NOT
BUT
DENY...



SIRE, EVEN
TATARA'S MEN
ARE GOING IN AND
OUT OF HIS
ESTATE NOW!

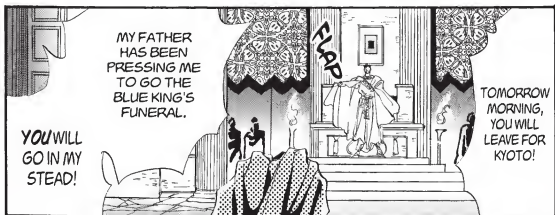
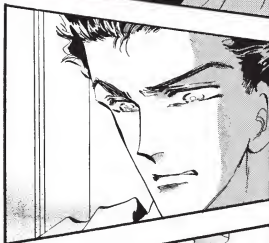
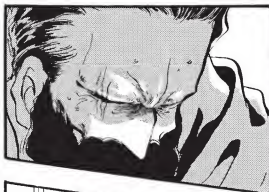


KAZAN!
LOOK
INTO MY
EYES AND
ANSWER
ME!

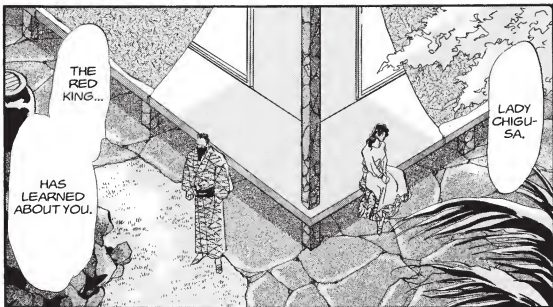
KEEP
QUIET,
ASHO!



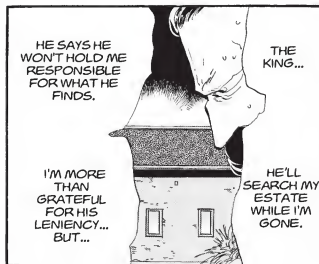
GENERAL, YOU
MUST RECOGNIZE
THE KING'S
GENEROUS
INTERPRETATIONS!















HE'S
GOING TO
KUMANO.

GENERAL
KAZAN
WAS
TAKING
TATARA'S
MOTHER.



THAT
WAS
QUICK.

DID YOU
SEE
HER?



CHA-
CHA.



WE'VE DONE
OUR JOB
THEN.

LET'S
HEAD
BACK.

OH!

THAT
WOULD BE
CONVENIENT!



I
JUST
CAN'T!

I
CAN'T TELL
TATARA
THAT
THERE'S
SOMETHING
BETWEEN
HIS MOTHER
AND
GENERAL
KAZAN...



CHA-
CHA?



TATARA!

HISHA'S
BACK!

ZSH

HISHA!

TATARA!

I HAVE
WORD
FROM
CHACHA!

THEY
GAVE
ME THIS
FOR YOU.

HERE.



ACCORD-
ING
TO
CHACHA...

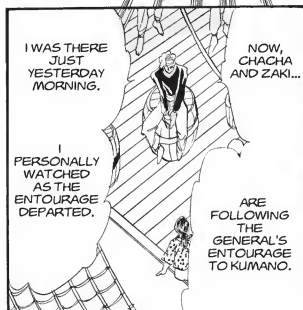
...SHE'S
UNDER
HOUSE
ARREST.

BUT SHE
SEEMED
TO BE
DOING
WELL.

SHE'S
ALIVE!

MOM!

IT'S
MOM'S...



I WAS THERE
JUST
YESTERDAY
MORNING.

I
PERSONALLY
WATCHED
AS THE
ENTOURAGE
DEPARTED.

NOW,
CHACHA
AND ZAKI...

ARE
FOLLOWING
THE
GENERAL'S
ENTOURAGE
TO KUMANO.

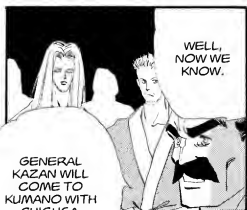


OH,
CHACHA!

THAT'S
GREAT
NEWS,
TATARA!

THANK
YOU!

TATARA!



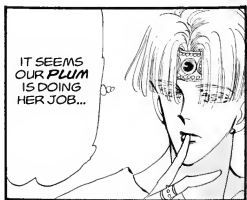
WELL,
NOW WE
KNOW.



BUT
THINGS
WILL BE
DIFFERENT
ON THE
ROAD.



WOO-HOO!!
YAY!
YEAH!



IT SEEMS
OUR PLUM
IS DOING
HER JOB...

IF ONLY I
COULD
TALK TO
HER!

OH,
MOM!

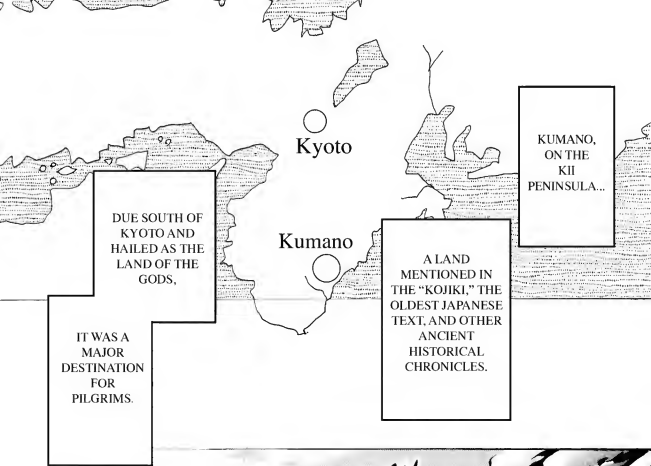
I HOPE
THEY
DON'T
KEEP YOU
TIED UP.

ARE YOU
HURT?
OR SICK?

OH,
MOM...

DO THEY
GIVE YOU
ENOUGH
TO EAT?





Kyoto

Kumano

KUMANO,
ON THE
KII
PENINSULA...

DUE SOUTH OF
KYOTO AND
HAILED AS THE
LAND OF THE
GODS,

IT WAS A
MAJOR
DESTINATION
FOR
PILGRIMS.

A LAND
MENTIONED IN
THE "KOJIKI," THE
OLDEST JAPANESE
TEXT, AND OTHER
ANCIENT
HISTORICAL
CHRONICLES.



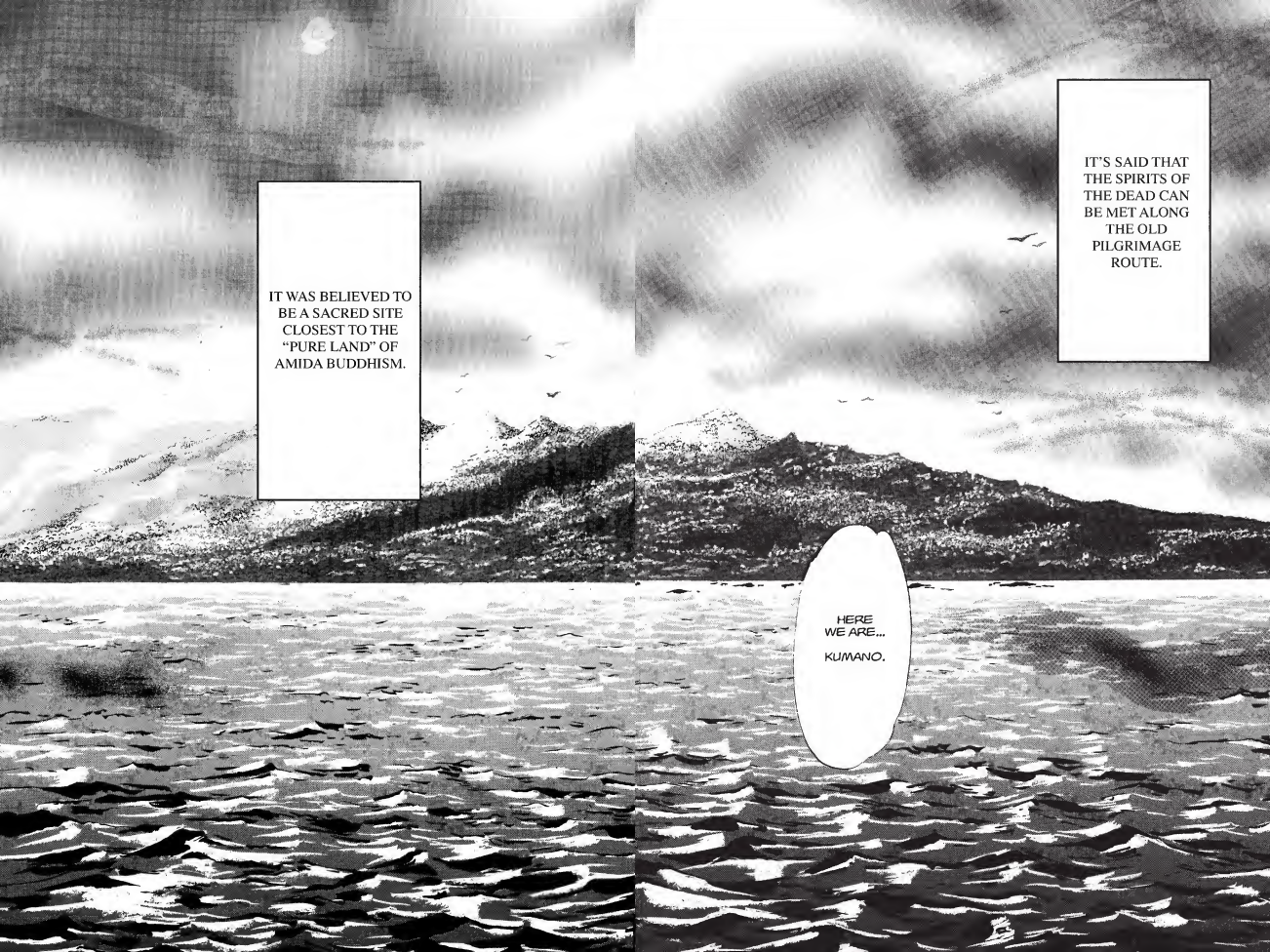
IN THE
DAYS
OF
OLD...
AND
EVEN
NOW...

WERE CALLED
THE "KUMANO
ANT TRAIL."

AS A CENTER FOR
SHINTO AND
BUDDHIST ASCETIC
PRACTICES, IT
DREW SO MANY
WORSHIPPERS
THAT THE
SWARMS...

TATARA,
LOOK.

THE
SHORE IS
IN SIGHT.

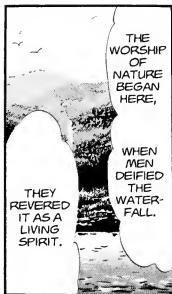


IT WAS BELIEVED TO
BE A SACRED SITE
CLOSEST TO THE
"PURE LAND" OF
AMIDA BUDDHISM.

IT'S SAID THAT
THE SPIRITS OF
THE DEAD CAN
BE MET ALONG
THE OLD
PILGRIMAGE
ROUTE.

HERE
WE ARE...
KUMANO.





THEY
REVERED
IT AS A
LIVING
SPIRIT.

THE
WORSHIP
OF
NATURE
BEGAN
HERE,

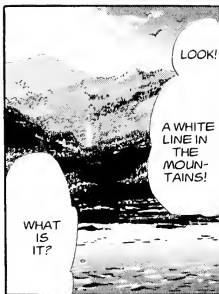
WHEN
MEN
DEIFIED
THE
WATER-
FALL.



IT'S A
WATER-
FALL.

IT'S
THE
TALLEST
IN
JAPAN.

THAT
ONE'S
NACHI
FALLS.



LOOK!

A WHITE
LINE IN
THE MOUN-
TAINS!

WHAT
IS
IT?



GULP



I KNOW A
WAY TO
GET TO
LAND.

LEAVE IT
ALL TO
ME.



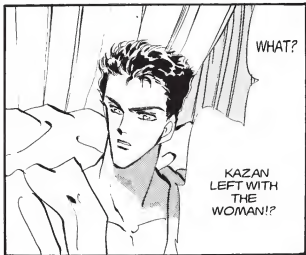
THERE ARE A
LOT OF
FISHING
VESSELS
ABOUT.

WE MIGHT
BE SEEN.

TATARA.

WE
SHOULD
STOP
AROUND
HERE--

HIDE THE
SHIP AMONG
THE ROCKS.





BONUS

TAM-TAM TIME

We went on a research trip to Kumano!

THANKS FOR ALL
YOUR SUPPORT!

AND KEEP THOSE
LETTERS COMING! ♥

I CAN'T WRITE BACK AS
MUCH AS I'D LIKE. ◯
MY LETTERS'LL BE PRETTY
LATE (LIKE, SEVERAL
MONTHS). ☹
PLEASE BE PATIENT!



↑
This isn't really a self-
portrait.

BASARA'S UP TO
VOL. 6!

BUT THERE'S PLENTY MORE
TO COME!

PLEASE STAY TUNED!

OH, IN CASE THEY MAKE
BASARA INTO AN ANIME
SHOW, TELL ME YOUR
OPINIONS ON WHICH VOICE
ACTORS WOULD FIT WHICH
ROLES!

TAMU.

LET'S GO
THERE TO
RESEARCH!

Kumano is in
Wakayama!
That's my home
prefecture.

But...

And so, the
story turned to
Kumano.

↑
It's always
arbitrary like
this.

GOING TO
KUMANO
SOUNDS
GOOD,
TOO.

↑
Just a
whim.

↑
Still
Ryuzaburo.
↑
SURE,
KUMANO'S
GOOD.

WHERE
SHOULD
WE SEND
HER
NEXT?

I was
talking to
my editor
one day...

My
substitute,
Ryuzaburo.

BUT IT
MIGHT BE
INTERESTING
TO STOP IN
KYOTO.

WE
COULD GO
STRAIGHT
NORTH-
EAST...

I went to Nagoya
via bullet train...

ZOOM~



and went south
through Mie
Prefecture on the
Kisei Railway.

I considered
going by boat
to pretend I'm
Sarasa, but--

FOO.



So I had to
give that up.

OSAKA

I hail from
Wakayama
City.

Here.

WAKAYAMA
CITY

WAKAYAMA
PREFECTURE.

This area is
Kumano

HONGU SHINGU

KATSU'URA

TAIJI

SHIONO-MISAKI

So I've never
been to Kumano,
which is a good
distance away.

SSSHHHHH

It was
pouring rain.

FOO.



So we arrived
in Katsu'ura,
Kii.

Nachi Falls
is the
tallest in
Japan...

...but I
always thought
of it as
really thin.



IT'S
NOT OFTEN
YOU SEE
WATERFALLS
LIKE THAT.

...said the
taxi driver.

OH?

He's right.



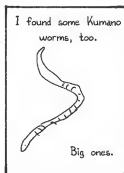
We were thinking it
would be pointless
to go see Nachi
Falls in this rain,
but...

I
DON'T
THINK
SO.

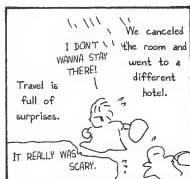
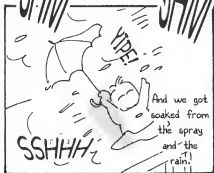




We were totally amazed.



I found some Kumano worms, too.



Travel is full of surprises.

We canceled the room and went to a different hotel.



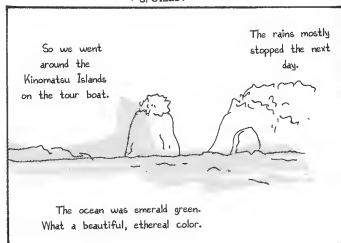
...was so dark and dank and dirty.

BZZ

ICK!

A FLY!

↑ SPOILED.



So we went around the Kinomatsu Islands on the tour boat.

The rains mostly stopped the next day.

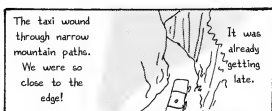
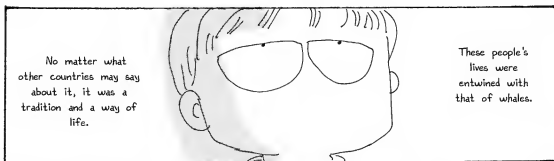
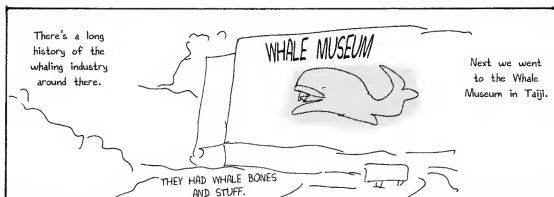
The ocean was emerald green. What a beautiful, ethereal color.



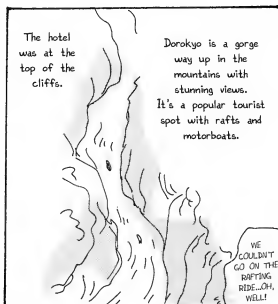
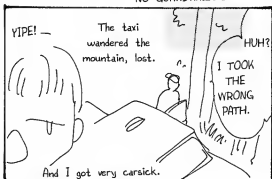
HOWEVER...

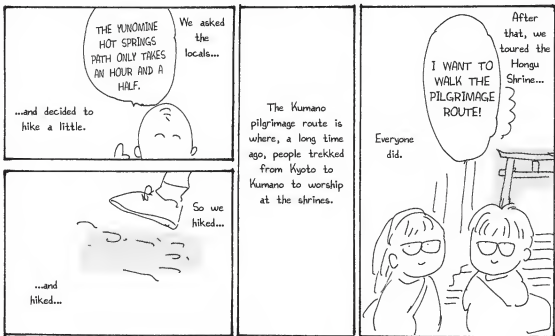
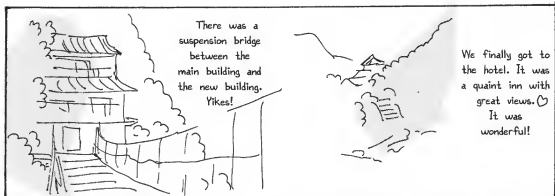
With the long rainy spell...

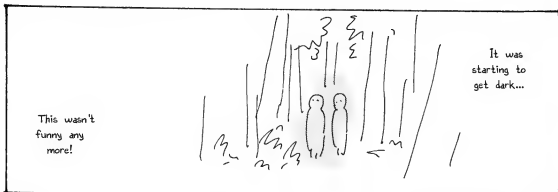
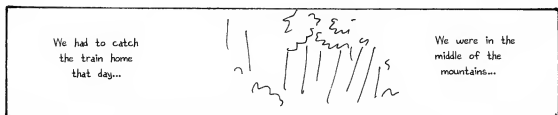
...its volume had swelled to several times its usual size.



NO GUARDRAILS.







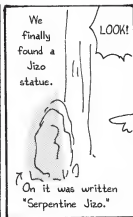
SERPENTINE JIZO

WE WENT
THIS WAY
INSTEAD.

HOT
SPRINGS

KUMANO
HONGU
SHRINE.

WE WERE
SUPPOSED TO TAKE
THIS PATH.

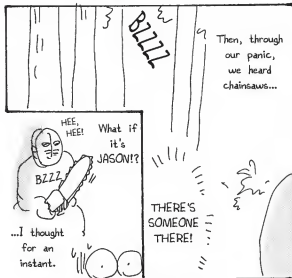


WHAT!?

But what'll we
do when we run
out!?



Luckily, we had bought
some cans of juice.
And dumplings we were
going to take home.

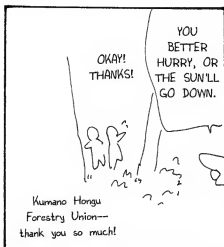


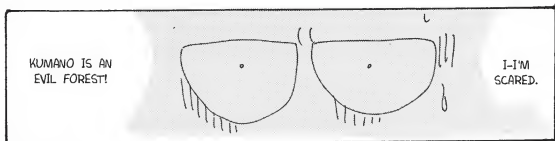
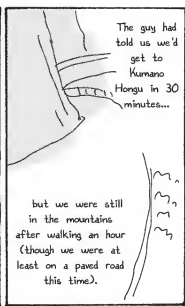
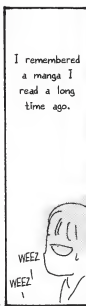
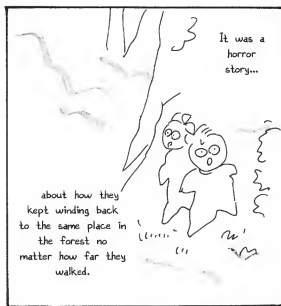
Then, through
our panic,
we heard
chainsaws...

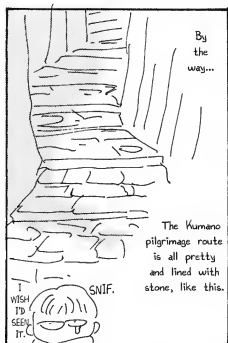
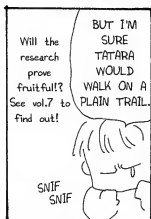
We were lost
in the middle
of the forest!

WE
TURNED
THE
WRONG
WAY!

OH,
NO!







Find me in Betsu-comics, Deluxe comics, and Karin, too! ♥ Check out my novels from Palette Books! See you later! Take care!